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TWENTY YEARS AGO as we write the heir to the Austrian throne and his duchess were already dead in Sarajevo, murdered by the assassin's bullet by which an era also died. *The Nation,* commenting editorially, in its issue of July 2, 1914, on the assassination, felt that it marked the disorganization of the Austro-Hungarian empire but added "that there is no good reason for believing that Austria will be deflected from the general line of policy and of imperial development which she has been pursuing." In addition to the Sarajevo murder, *The Nation* made editorial mention of Mexican intrigues, interest on capital, Jack London's letters in *Collier's,* the theater season of 1913-14 which had been a season of farce and light sentiment, in contrast to the corresponding season in American life, "one of business depression, I. W. W. demonstrations, child-labor agitation, minimum-wage agitation, and tenement-house improvement agitation." The following week's issue contained only a mention of the time and place of the arch-duke's funeral. The lighted fuse had not yet traveled the whole way toward the bomb which was to explode all over Europe and was to hit the United States and Asia as well. On the whole, people were occupied with other matters than with the assassination of even a grand-duke. But for some years afterward the consequences of that assassination were to occupy them fairly completely, and while we might at one time have presumed to think that the final bill for Sarajevo had been settled, today it appears that the account is still open. On June 28, 1934, the anniversary of the murder, bombs were bursting throughout Austria, some of them probably aimed at the Premier of France; in France on the same day a British military party visited Soissons, purely for "social" reasons, it was insisted, although the visit followed a similar jaunt to England the week before, by the French chief of staff; it was announced that France as well as Germany is preparing to fight with gas as well as disease germs; the British have declared themselves on the necessity of a large naval increase; and the American navy, for the first time in sixteen years, has lately been assembled in impressive formation in the Hudson River. In other words, Sarajevos may be happening all around us; we did not recognize them in 1914, we may not recognize them now. But we have done nothing, in the intervening two decades, to prevent a recurrence of what almost destroyed us.

IT WOULD BE NICE, said Harry L. Hopkins, federal Relief Administrator, the other day, if a lot of the people who now cannot find work in cities should move to the country. They could have a little cottage "bought at a fair price so that the purchaser will not be loaded so deeply in debt that he can't get out"; they would spend part of their day tending their own gardens on their own land; the rest of the time they would spend working in some small nearby factory which by a government miracle had arisen to take care of just such an industrial emergency. And Mr. Hopkins is right; it *would* be nice. His scheme for the deurbanization of our population to take care of what seems to him now a permanent relief problem would certainly provide a happy life for the community dwellers who managed to live in their little debt-free houses and work in their little factories. What it would do to the farmers whose produce these self-sufficient ex-urbanites would no longer buy, or the factory workers whose product they would now make themselves is, of course, another question and one which seems not to have occurred to Mr. Hopkins. His accompanying suggestion of unemployment insurance is a far sounder one. A genuine system of unemployment insurance would do much to carry the unemployed worker through the worst horrors of an industrial slack, and it would be relief that he had earned a right to by his own industry. It is a pretty irony that the "dole" which threw Mr. Hoover into hysterical protests of its un-Americanism, and which might, if it had been in operation under his Administration have saved the government many hundreds of millions of dollars, is now thoroughly respectable and is mentioned with approval not only by the federal administrator of relief but by the President of the United States himself.

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THE SANCTITY of the American home is the traditional premise of American life, the theme-song of politicians, the grail for which moral and economic reformers struggle and bleed. American business yields to none in defending this sanctuary which, indeed, business is organized to serve, improve, and adorn—at a profit. Most of the 2,500 delegates who attended the recent convention of the American Home Economics Association in New York probably accepted these premises and attempted gallantly to reconcile them with certain obstinate facts. At least half the homes of America are precariously maintained at or below the minimum subsistence level largely by a growing though quite inadequate public expenditure for direct and indirect relief. These "extra-economic families," as Professor Walter Pitkin recently called them, escape the solicitude of the higher salesmanship, because business cannot make a profit out of them. Second, the solicitude of government, as Professor Paul Douglas pointed out to the delegates, has made the consumer-housewife the chief victim of the price-raising policies of the NRA; when government has attempted to serve the consumer directly, through the passage of a better food and drugs law, the setting up of a Consumer Standards Board, the insertion of grading and standards provisions in the codes, and so forth, government has been rebuked and defeated by the superior solicitude of business. This triumphant solicitude was evidenced by an abundance of advertising displays and literature which gave the convention a little of the atmosphere of a county fair.

BY BOMBING the first train to pass from Mukden to Peiping since 1931, Chinese partisans have sought to call attention to Nanking's shameful capitulation to Japan on the long-standing railway controversy. Stung by the failure of the Power to recognize "Manchukuo," the Japanese have been centering their efforts for the past year on the attempt to force China into what might be construed as *de facto* recognition. This they hoped to achieve by a series of steps, of which the opening of through train service and the restoration of normal postal relations were to be among the first. But although Chiang Kai-shek himself has been openly pro-Japanese, public opinion in general has been bitterly opposed to rapprochement with Japan. Consequently the issue has been allowed to drag along for months, with the Chinese inimitable in their capacity for evasion and procrastination. Meanwhile, however, the North China government has been increasingly staffed by members of the notorious, pro-Japanese Anfu clique, which the students had driven from power in 1919 on the charge of selling out to the enemy. Through the influence of this group an agreement has been reached to reopen the Sino-Japanese Exchange Bank at Tientsin, and for refunding one of the unrecognized "Nishihara loans." This northern government also appears to have played a decisive role in settling the railway question. While these concessions have aroused vigorous resentment in South China, the reaction has been somewhat tempered by Japan's warning that it will "be forced to take necessary steps" unless disturbances in Southern Fukien are immediately curbed.

AFTER ELEVEN MONTHS of unsuccessful effort to bring the gospel of industrial democracy to anti-union employers, the National Labor Board has at last been abolished. It will be replaced by the newly created National Labor Relations Board, an adjunct of the Department of Labor. With this change, the government apparently abandons all intention of enforcing Section 7-a with firmness, vigor, and dispatch. The new board will not even be empowered to mediate or conciliate in labor disputes; that will be reserved to the Conciliation Service of the Department of Labor. It will have no authority to force reluctant employers to "recognize" trade unions or to negotiate agreements with a union that truly represents the employees. According to the text of the executive order, the board's decisions will be void of sanctions and of any punitive power. On the positive side, the board will be authorized to "investigate" labor disputes; to order and conduct elections of employee representatives for collective bargaining; to hold hearings and issue findings of fact on charges of 7-a violations; finally, to act as a coordinator and court of last review for labor boards established in individual industries and regions. Significantly, the other executive agencies of the government are asked to "keep hands off" any dispute over which the Labor Relations Board assumes jurisdiction, and must accept the board's findings of fact as conclusive. This means the definite removal of the NRA from further intervention in labor disputes, and the future exclusion of General Johnson's strike-breaking tactics. But the new board, it is to be feared, will have limited scope, and will function, in essence, as an "omnium gatherum" for petty disputes. Such major disputes as occur will be handled by the special boards already established in the big industries: automobile, iron and steel, bituminous coal, cotton textiles, wool and silk textiles, construction, graphic arts, newspaper publishing, and others.

JOHN DONOVAN, whose discharge by General Johnson was reported in *The Nation* last week, has not yet been reinstated. Instead the axe has fallen on still another head: that of Dr. A. G. Silverman, chief statistician to the Labor Advisory Board. In part, Silverman's recent "indefinite suspension without pay" arose out of the identical context of circumstances as the Donovan discharge. Silverman, who belonged to the same bloc as Donovan, believed fervently that the Labor Advisory Board should devote all its energies to promoting collective bargaining. Moreover, he did not hesitate to speak his mind about higher-ups in the Board who, he thought, took Section 7-a lightly. In part, however, Silverman's suspension was the outgrowth of a personal feud between himself and Dr. Gustav Peck. Silverman had been assigned to prepare a statistical report which Sidney Hillman, board member, was to present at a hearing on proposed amendments to the cotton garment code. Silverman was instructed, so he contends, to prove a thesis: that it was desirable, in the interests of reemployment, to shorten the code hours. His study, unfortunately, pointed toward different conclusions: that there had been substantial non-compliance with such hours and wages as the code already specified. Despite pressure to do so, Silverman refused to doctor the data. This led Peck to issue a statement in which he threatened with discharge a certain unnamed member of the staff who had prepared a "lousy" report which had to be revised "in toto." Silverman issued a counter-statement in which he charged that Hillman and Peck were perverting the professional integrity of the Board's experts in order to serve personal ends. The suspension followed immediately

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thereafter. Peck, in announcing the suspension, ignored the issue of professional integrity. He thought it "outrageous" for the newspapers to give publicity to the "unsubstantiated charges of a mere clerk." (Silverman was formerly on the faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and served as a statistician for the National Bureau of Economic Research.) The formal ground for the action was insubordination, in that the statistician had given out a statement without first submitting it to his superiors.

MAYOR FRANK O. HAGUE, of Jersey City, was once a policeman, and he still has the policeman's viewpoint on such heinous crimes as labor picketing. His edict forbidding picketing and his treatment of the strike sympathizers who have been patrolling the Miller furniture factory—19 have been arrested, including Alfred M. Bingham and Corliss Lamont—is certainly not conducive to the exercise of legal labor privileges, and the American Civil Liberties Union is well-advised to test this case, as it is doing. In his many years as mayor (and, incidentally, Democratic boss of New Jersey) Hague has boasted that his city is free of all crime and racketeering and that labor racketeers in particular have been driven out. This is amusing when one remembers Mayor Hague's friendship for and patronage of Theodore M. Brandle, the ousted building trades czar, who was a labor racketeer if there ever was one. Mayor Hague, in fact, is recognized by bona-fide union leaders as a union-buster, while his city is known all through the East as "Scab City, N. J."

THE SHUTDOWN of the Harriman Hosiery Mill in Tennessee in protest against its loss of the Blue Eagle on April 20, is a patent instance of blackmail. If the NRA gives in to the mill's contention that punishment should not be administered because punishment hurts, then Section 7-a might as well be struck out of the Recovery Act for all the meaning it will have south of the Mason-Dixon line. The Blue Eagle was removed on the basis of the recommendation of the now-defunct National Labor Board. By unanimous decision, the Board found the management guilty of violating Section 7-a "by entering negotiations in bad faith with the definite intention not to make any agreement with the representatives of its employees." Behind this recommendation lay a distressing story of trickery and evasion. In July 1933, the hosiery workers' union sought to organize the mill; some thirty wage-earners, all of them active union members, were forthwith discharged. After the strike began on October 26, 1933, the management immediately imported strike-breakers from the surrounding countryside. Following their return from a hearing before the National Labor Board on January 4, 1934 a number of strike-leaders were jailed by virtue of an injunction granted by a pliant State court. The mill consistently refused to bargain through to a bilateral agreement with the union officers. It took the position that it sufficed to post such wage schedules as the management intended to observe. Just before the recent shutdown, which threw 653 wage-earners out of work, some 300 strikers were still locked out. When the Blue Eagle was removed, the management of the mill instigated certain merchants of Harriman to threaten the return of their NRA emblems in a mass protest. No sooner had the mill shut down than Fred Held, officer of the international union, was kidnapped and hustled out of town. Unfortunately, the NRA seems ready to compromise the issue. It is now engaged in negotiations which will lead to the return of the Blue Eagle in the event that the mill agrees to reemploy some 50 of the 300 workers locked out.

THE DISTRESSING PROBLEMS of the dairy farmer, many people used to believe, would long ago have been solved if the farmer himself had anything to say or do in the matter. But the results of the election of directors of the Inter-State Milk Producers' Association, made public in Philadelphia last week, proved that in that instance the farmer failed utterly to seize his opportunity of capturing control of the organization, a marketing cooperative accused of being the tool of the large distributors. Thirteen new directors were to be elected, for an area including parts of six Eastern States (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia) and the thirteen stand-pat candidates won completely over the thirteen put up by the insurgent Allied Dairy Farmers' Association. Since the election, recriminations and opprobrium have been hurled upon the farmers for their inertia. But the true story goes a bit deeper. The farmers were frankly afraid of losing their markets if they voted against the hand-picked directorate. This cooperative, like nearly all others, is absolute master of the farmer's destiny and if it chooses to exploit him in favor of the distributor, there is really nothing he can do about it. It is obvious that the dairy farmer cannot help himself; he must be helped by the federal government. But marketing agreements, production control, and price-fixing attempts at stabilization have failed. The Administration must go further and place the whole dairy industry on a public utility basis. It is to be hoped that the Federal Trade Commission will so recommend, as the result of the investigation it has been assigned to make.

THE RIGHT WING of the Socialist Party had its way at the New York State convention and even the editors of the *Daily Worker* will find it difficult to exaggerate the absurdity of its performance from the Marxist point of view. Led by Louis Waldman, they repudiated the "left" pronouncements of the Detroit national convention and elected a solid right slate of fifteen members of the State Committee. James Oneal, who could have had the nomination for United States Senator, withdrew in the interest of Norman Thomas and "harmony," while Charles Solomon was nominated for Governor. On the balloting each of these running-mates voted firmly against the other. In key-noting the program of his triumphant machine Mr. Waldman declared "We must repudiate the proposal to give loyal support to any person who comes in conflict with the law on account of anti-war activities." When a few scattered cheers greeted the announcement that there had been a "revolution" in Germany, Mr. Waldman reminded the convention that "this is a Socialist convention, and cheers for a revolution are not in order." The convention adjourned after passing a resolution emasculating the "left" phraseology of the Detroit declaration of principles. It seems probable that New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California, and Massachusetts will take similar action. Paraphrasing Lenin, what the Socialist Party seems to be suffering from is "infantile rightism," the focus of the infection being New York and the *Jewish Daily Forward*.

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The Nazi Blood Bath

THE amazing and bloody news from Germany means the beginning of the end of the Nazi rule—at least in its original form. Doubtless Hitler and Goering by their wholesale murders have fortified themselves for the moment and may hold on to their power by terroristic methods for some time to come. But their prestige is tremendously shaken; they can no longer pose as supermen with a united Germany behind them. At their doors lie the deaths of men killed "while resisting arrest" or "attempting to escape," and others "who killed themselves." Not pacifists or Communists or Social-Democrats or Jews this time, but men of their own crowd, comrades in uniform murdered in a St. Bartholomew's night as unexpected as it is horrifying, and some of them portrayed to their countrymen by Hitler himself as being caught in unprintable orgies of sex perversion.

All of this will come as a terrific shock to the deluded German people. For a year and a half every loud speaker has blared forth the assertion that the country was overwhelmingly behind the Leader; that peace and concord were reestablished; that all disorderly elements had been imprisoned or expelled; that everyone was united upon a great constructive platform conceived by an archangel to restore the country to its rightful position among the nations of the earth. Now they read of a massacre for which one must go to Italy in the Middle Ages or to the annals of some South American Republic for a parallel. They are learning not that the rebel elements were Communists or elements long opposed ot the Hitler regime, but, so far as they were members of the Brown Shirt army, close followers of Hitler who have been his confidants and aides. They are certainly shocked to read of the killing of an ex-Chancellor, General von Schleicher, and his wife, and to read from Hitler's own pen that many of his followers have been paying for celebrations and dinners and dissipation out of public or Nazi funds—they who charged the Social-Democrats, whom they ousted from office, with wholesale peculation and corruption! Plainly it is impossible to overestimate the tremendous psychological effect of these happenings which no censorship could conceal. The great bulk of the Germans are still peace-loving and law-abiding. What will they not say to the shooting down of a score of Nazi leaders without trial? It can not be written down this time as Jewish propaganda or the invention of foreign atrocity-mongers. Certainly the worst charges ever made against the Communists did not include such cold-blooded dispatching of men in opposition.

That all this will rouse a deep feeling of doubt and fear among millions of heretofore credulous Germans is obvious. It will further unsettle business conditions, injure the tourist traffic, render worse the currency situation, and generally make more difficult the efforts of those who are trying to head off iminent economic collapse. It will enormously encourage the Catholic opposition. But the greatest damage is to Hitler himself. At one blow it shows him to be a knight of the revolver and not divinely inspired to lead by the nobility of his example and his teachings. Moreover, it deprives him of his influence in foreign affairs—at least the world will wait now to see whether this "little corporal" lasts or not; and whether he will not soon yield his office to a military dictator or to a royal prince. Germany will be lucky, indeed, if it escapes a bloody civil war. With bitter disillusionment the German public will reject the lie that, as Dr. Goebbels said only a few weeks ago, the "new spirit" of the revolution had filled "the entire German people."

Obviously the clash between the left-wing elements and those of the right-wing was inevitable. Hitler had furnished plenty of circuses and some bread—but not enough. Beyond driving out the Jews, crushing all his political opponents, and wiping out the States, he had carried out none of the reforms which he had promised his supporters. Many of them really believed that he meant to give them a national socialism stopping only short of communism itself. When he admitted ex-Communists to the Nazi ranks, he insured the continuance of the demand for the radical measures, such as nationalization of the banks and all the trusts and the breaking up of the great estates, to which he was pledged. Now he has written in blood his choice; he has gone to the right. But here his troubles have not ended. Into which camp of the right will he move?

We only know that he has won a moment's breathing space. But it can only be a moment, for behind him stands the unescapable economic situation which no amount of official falsification can conceal; the moratorium on all debt payments; the unbalanced budget; the paralyzing drop in exports; the international boycott; the exhaustion of the gold reserve; the disappearance of the foreign currencies necessary for the purchase of indispensable raw materials; the steadily sinking standard of living in the face of rising agricultural prices certain to be enhanced by the alarming drought; and finally the marked decrease in the national income. Nothing in Hitler's career ever gave promise that he could master a situation like this. It gives his big business masters and the Junkers the weapons they need to turn upon him.

From his sick-bed at Neudeck the aged Hindenburg has telegraphed Hitler and General Goering his "profound thanks" for their energetic action in suppressing the plotters. Von Papen, who appears to have had cognizance of both the "right" and "left" conspirators, but not to have committed himself fatally to either, was at first held prisoner in his home, under the protection of a special Reichswehr guard. As we go to press it is reported that he will be replaced as Vice Chancellor by General Goering, and that the ineffable Goebbels, who barely escaped involvement in the conspiracy, will become ambassador to Poland.

Von Blomberg, head of the Reichswehr, has pledged the loyalty of the army, which indeed got everything that it wanted when Hitler furloughed the Storm Troopers and rejected their demand to be amalgamated with the armed forces of the German state. The French press feels that Hitler is in a stronger position than ever; the English press is skeptical. The prospect is for further bloody "cleansings" of the storm troops, and perhaps for sporadic revolts of the disorganized, leaderless, and unarmed German workers; this to be followed by a military dictatorship, with Hitler's position as tool and figurehead becoming more precarious.

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Farewell, Mr. Roosevelt

THOSE millions of us who listened to your goodbye address to the country on June 28, listened in silence and with mixed feelings. You asked us to compare our present state—of security, of employment, of income—with our state fifteen months before, and to judge, on the basis of this comparison, the relative merits of the New Deal. About three and a half million of us, if we had had a chance to answer, could have told you that we had found a job during the year, either on public work or in private industry. Some of us who rank as businessmen (our numbers are not easy to discover) could have told you that we are finding things better—enough better to account for a leveling up of of the general business index figure for the whole country from 58.5 to about 80.4. The rest of us would have had to confess that materially life is not much more satisfactory than it was in March 1933. The 10,000,000-odd who are still unemployed are just as unemployed as ever; in fact our hoarded resources, if we ever had any, are still further diminished, so that we need more help than we did a year ago. The result of this is that almost a million more of us are on some sort of dole this spring than last, despite the drop in unemployment. Those of us who are working are not receiving better real wages than when you first instituted your program of increasing our purchasing power. Between March 1933 and March 1934 our wage level was raised by 9.7 per cent but meanwhile the cost of the things we must buy went up 9.3 per cent, not as much as you hoped it would but enough to wipe out almost the whole value of our small apparent gains.

We wage-earners have another bone to pick with you, too. What about collective bargaining? It is in the law, but where is it in practice? You either cannot or dare not enforce your own law against bosses as strong as the steel and automobile men. Section 7-a of the NIRA is a taunt to you and to us; it might better never have been written into the law. In any case, since you asked us, we who are organized workers do not feel that we are better off than we were a year ago; and those of us who are unorganized see little hope of becoming organized. You said that the Administration stood behind us, but when we turn around we find instead gas bombs and injunctions and notices to quit.

Those of us who are farmers are even worse off. While prices of farm products have gone up, the cash income of farmers this May was exactly the same as it was a year ago. We can buy much less, however, because the price of the commodities farmers must buy has gone up 18.6 per cent. It is true that you have distributed some 815 millions to us through various agencies, including many millions as rewards for cutting down our production. These loans and doles were absorbed like water falling on parched ground; and our gratitude sprang up like corn. But now where are we? Many of us have lost half of the remainder of our product through drought and we face the future with only the assurance that we shall have to be supported by more and bigger doles. The drought was not your fault, or Secretary Wallace's. We mention it only to emphasize our plight as compared even with a year ago and to point up the difficulties inherent in any attempt to solve the economic problem by throttling production rather than organizing distribution. The drought was, we suspect, God's answer to the theory of creating an artificial scarcity in order to increase prices.

Well, Mr. President, we hope that you will have a good vacation. You deserve and need it. You have worked hard and faced terrific obstacles. Some you have successfully eluded, but you must often have felt balked and irritated by the difficulties thrown up in the way of your plans. For we believe that you honestly want to change the economic system of our country into one which, miraculously preserving the benefits of competition, will also provide security and decent living and working conditions for everybody. Some of your aims you have partly achieved, but more of them—the most fundamental and controversial—have foundered and sunk under a sea of apathy and resistance and outright sabotage.

Your farewell speech the other night, Mr. Roosevelt, was perhaps the least effective you have made to us. You were on the defensive and you sounded so. But your voyage should help to crystallize the picture of American life. You can throw off the unreal optimism that pained us the other night and accept and acknowledge the mistakes of your Administration. You can estimate the strength of the forces that are ranged against your success, discover on your way back across the country the true state of our needs, and then tackle the confusion of government with new clarity and determination. A sea change is what you and we both need.

The Paradox of Birth Control

DID you know that the Senate had passed the birth-control bill? It did—for five minutes, while Pat McCarran, the Catholic Senator from Nevada, was taking a nap. When he woke up he demanded a reconsideration of the vote, which meant that the Senators would have had to go on record, for and against. This they were unwilling to do, so Mrs. Sanger's bill, which had been favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee, was once more put to sleep.

But did you know that the Catholic Church had come out for birth control? It has. Why, then, did Senator McCarran oppose the bill? Because the Catholic version of birth control is not Mrs. Sanger's version. The Catholic version, while letting down the moral bars to the practice of birth control, still prohibits the use of contraceptives.

Quite recently, there appeared two little Catholic books, "The Rhythm" and "The Sterile Period in Family Life," in which women are told how they may have sexual intercourse without having a baby. One of these books is published with "ecclesiastical approbation" and the other with the "Imprimatur" of Patrick Cardinal Hayes. They are permitted to circulate freely through the mails by the Post Office Department, although Postmaster General Farley is a Roman Catholic. Under the birth-control bill, if passed, only physicians would be permitted to circulate such literature. But Mr. Farley's office goes the limit by permitting the birth-control method approved by Rome to be sent by laymen to laymen, regardless of sex, age, or marital condition. With the appearance of these two books, practically

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every argument of the Roman Church against birth control falls flat. What happens to the Catholic argument that knowledge of contraception will endanger the morals of the unmarried, when Catholics themselves are spreading wholesale a method of birth control which is sold over the counter or sent through the mails to anyone? The approved Papal method requires only a simple knowledge of the so-called sterile period in the menstrual cycle. As the president of the District of Columbia Medical Society reminds us, this method may be employed by any misguided girl parked in an automobile on any lonely road; whereas the recommended clinical method requires personal examination by a qualified physician and the preparation, time, and place which are best secured by married life.

The Catholic Church, if it liked, might justify its approval of the "sterile period" method of birth control on the ground that it doesn't work. At least it may be said unhesitatingly that it doesn't work as well as the recommended clinical method; first, because the indicated period of abstinence is not likely to be observed except by exceptionally well-disciplined people; second, because the period of relative sterility cannot be accurately determined.

Significantly, the earlier Catholic argument that contraception would result in underpopulation is abandoned in "The Rhythm." It is admitted that economic and social conditions are the determining controls of population growth, regardless of the means that may be employed. The democratic practice of contraception replaces more wasteful and disorganizing means of population control such as abortion, infanticide, celibacy, sex irregularities, needless infant and maternal mortality, and war.

The widespread practice of contraception has enabled Holland to increase her population at a faster rate than any country in the world with a comparably high standard of living. Moreover, Dr. William F. Ogburn and Dr. Warren S. Thompson, two distinguished members of the President's Committee on Social Trends, have discovered that birth control increases the proportion of married couples with respect to the total population.

The case for birth control is proved and, with 16,000,000 persons on relief and 10,600,000 wage earners unemployed, the need for birth control is overwhelming. These families have a birth rate 48 per cent higher than their more fortunate neighbors. Dr. Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins, in an exhaustive study for the Milbank Foundation, reaches the conclusion that "the national policy of prohibiting the free dissemination of accurate scientific information about birth control methods is adding definitely and measurably to the difficulty of the problem of poverty and unemployment with which our children and grandchildren will have to deal."

The present federal laws against birth control tie the hands of the medical profession and drive the distribution of contraceptives underground; the bootlegging of fake methods makes for tragedy and endangers public health. There are approximately 1,000,000 abortions in this country each year; 30,000 women die as a result of pregnancy or abortion, and 200,000 infants die or are born dead.

To the challenge of these ominous figures, the Catholic Church has answered with a new and indefensible evasion. Congress must return a better answer than that next fall. It must pass the birth-control bill.

The Movie Boycott

THE latest moral crusade against the movies appears to be gaining momentum. Many Protestant organizations have joined what was originally a Catholic movement to boycott theaters exhibiting improper films and, as Congress closed, certain rumblings began to be heard among statesmen glad of an opportunity to come out flatly against something as friendless as vice. The movies are, goodness knows, guilty enough, and on the surface, at least, there is nothing objectionable in the proposal that those who do not like what the theaters have to show should stay away en masse. Nevertheless, we doubt if the movement will actually accomplish very much for the simple reason that its effect is so completely negative. It merely tells Hollywood one more thing not to put into the films; it offers no concrete suggestions to a harried industry which has been forced into making an infantile salacity its stock in trade, largely because it is forbidden to deal with nearly everything else.

In the first place the Hays organization—trying desperately to please the international market as well as 10,000 different native women's clubs—has frowned upon anything containing the vestige of an idea because every idea is bound to offend someone. There is scarcely a single intellectually or artistically respectable novel or play in the whole range of literature which does not contain something offensive to the local prejudices of some place between Kansas City and Shanghai, and the films go all the way from one to the other. "Nana" is made respectable for the American market and then banned in France as a travesty on a national possession. What would be patriotic in one country is plain sedition in another, and anything with the slightest emotional or intellectual significance is dangerous because somebody somewhere is going to find it so. The movies cannot really interpret morals, manners, economics, or politics. What in heaven's name is left them except a kind of brainless, simpering, hypocritical salacity?

The magnates of Hollywood are not emissaries of Satan seeking whom they may destroy. They are, on the contrary, business men of rather limited imagination eagerly seeking for a common denominator, and so far unable to find anything except legs, questionable jokes, and bedroom stories which seem to possess the requisite universal appeal. Even the public is not wholly to blame. The trinity enumerated above is not the only thing it can agree on from China to Peru. But it is about the only thing that every public everywhere finds more or less interesting.

One remedy would be to let down the bars a little in America. If the movies were given the freedom now enjoyed by the play and the novel to treat serious things seriously; if the *ostensible* moral were not always required to be so completely conventional; then the very competition of serious themes might well reduce somewhat the number of merely salacious spectacles. But even that would not solve the problem created by the fact that the industry as now organized must appeal to everybody everywhere. Common denominators are terrible things and the common denominator of the whole vast international movie audience is lower than the common denominator of each of fifty different groups would be.

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Issues and Men

Upton Sinclair Startles California

UPTON SINCLAIR has written me a pleasant note to the effect that he had read my tribute to Josephine Roche, adding: "I'm not a bit jealous. But it happens that our movement also is important and you ought to tell *The Nation's* readers about it. When you were out here, you said nobody thought that I would get the Democratic nomination. Today you would be correct if you would say that nobody thinks anything else. I do not know a single political observer who has said anything but this."

Well, Upton Sinclair would have been justified in reminding me more severely. I have been remiss in not again calling attention to his candidacy and to the extraordinary run he is making for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. While I do not agree with him about the extent of the favorable opinion as to his chances—the New York *Times* Los Angeles correspondent speaks of his victory as a "possible contingency"—there can be no doubt that his candidacy has gone like wild-fire. Arthur Caylor, writing in the San Francisco *News,* declares that one prominent Democrat is willing to bet that if the election were held now Sinclair would poll more votes than Senator McAdoo did in the Roosevelt landslide. The Republicans are equally worried because they have just as many unemployed as have the Democrats, and each of the old-line parties is blaming the other for not having taken notice of the Sinclair prairie fire until it had gotten away from them. They were saying in April that Sinclair hadn't a chance for the nomination, having neither a political organization nor money. There they were wrong, too. Sufficient money has poured in—not all that he would like to have by any means—and if any of our readers should wish to help they would be doing a most welcome and worthwhile deed. But I do not think that his success will depend upon having a few thousand dollars more or less. In the 1923 election the British Labor Party began work utterly hopeless because of the lack of funds. Only Harold Laski declared that they didn't need much money and ought not to have a lot. He pointed out that the party had a rich bank to draw upon in the enthusiasm of the young men and women of the labor ranks, which, being unpaid, is worth infinitely more than the paid labor of party hacks and heelers who usually give about fifty cents' worth of work on the dollar.

So I believe Upton Sinclair's campaign has gone on with very little reference to the amount of money put in. His gospel has spread because even in California people are ready for a new deal, eager for new teachings, ready to listen to Sinclair as a Democrat when they would not hear him as a Socialist. The plain people of California have been much more ready for a change than the big-business gentlemen who own California have known or been willing to admit. I even found in the conservative organizations that I addressed in that State last winter an astounding readiness to listen to things that I have been saying ever since the war, but which I wouldn't have been asked to say before those organizations five years ago. There is deep unrest in many portions of the State; the great harbor-workers' strike is in its second month; the workers in the Ojai and Imperial valleys, held down by brute force, are more nearly at the breaking point than ever before; the unemployed in the southern portion of the State are still extremely numerous and there are groups like the school teachers that are really ready for a radical change. These are some of the explanations for Upton Sinclair's startling run.

Of these facts the most interesting is that Sinclair is making such a bid for the governorship upon the Democratic ticket. It shows again, in my judgment, that there is no hope for the Socialist Party in the United States. Upton Sinclair can offer the same goods on the Democratic ticket and have a market for his wares. He would not be listened to under the Socialist flag. Of course, to the Socialists, he seems a traitor; but they themselves split so seriously at their recent convention that this summer will tell whether the two wings will be able to continue to work together or go their separate ways. A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but a radical program in the United States makes a lot more headway under any other name than socialism, and Sinclair has been realistic enough to recognize this fact and to act upon it.

If Upton Sinclair wins the Democratic nomination there will be a battle for fair with all the big-business Democrats flocking together with the Republicans to try to keep him out of the governorship. All the forces of privilege will come together to head off the Socialist in the garb of a Democrat. It will be a struggle which the whole country should watch and I have no doubt that the Roosevelt Administration will throw itself behind Sinclair, even at the risk of having the Simeon Fesses, the Mark Sullivans, and the William Wirts make use of the opportunity to insist once more that the Roosevelt Administration is really a Bolshevik one.

"End Poverty In California" is Sinclair's slogan, which abbreviated gives the word EPIC, and this his campaign may well turn out to be. Innocent men in prison will have a friend in the capital, and if he won't have something to say about the suppression of liberty in the southern portion of California, I shall miss my guess. I know that there are many people who doubt his executive ability. That would have to be proved. There are others who fear his trustfulness, his readiness to believe what he is told whatever the source, and a certain inaccuracy in reporting. These might hurt his efficiency as a governor, but they would be, I am convinced, accepted cheerfully, if they should develop, as the price for having at Sacramento a man of unfailing industry in the cause of the people, who has shown a devotion to the welfare of the masses surpassed by none.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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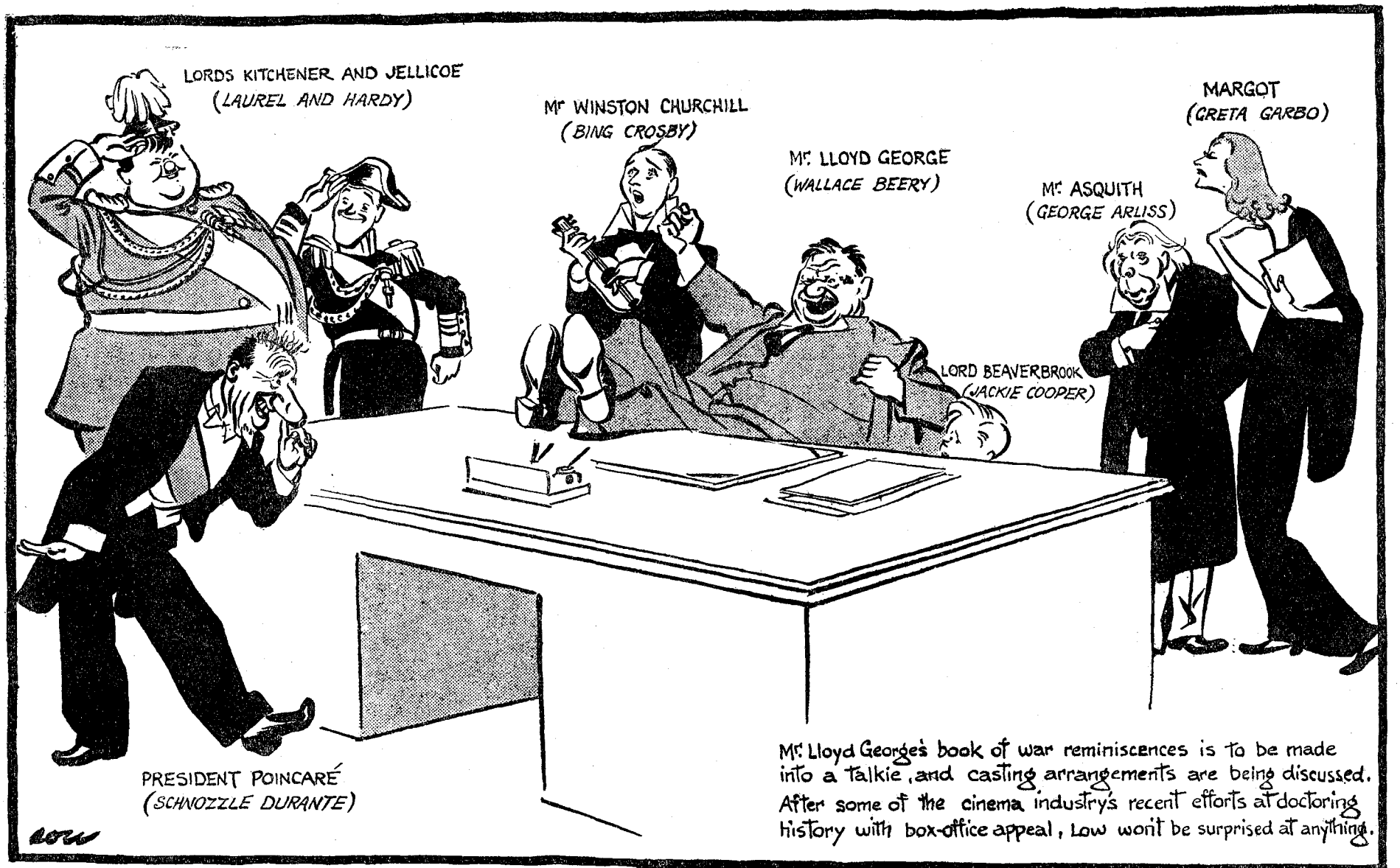
A Cartoon by LOW


LORDS KITCHENER AND JELLICOE
(LAUREL AND HARDY)
Mr WINSTON CHURCHILL
(BING CROSBY)
Mr. LLOYD GEORGE
(WALLACE BEERY)
MARGOT
(GRETA GARBO)
Mr. ASQUITH
(GEORGE ARLISS)
LORD BEAVERBROOK
(JACKIE COOPER)
PRESIDENT POINCARÉ
(SCHNOZZLE DURANTE)
LOW
Mr. Lloyd George's book of war reminiscences is to be made into a talkie, and casting arrangements are being discussed. After some of the cinema industry's recent efforts at doctoring history with box-office appeal, Low won't be surprised at anything.

1914 — ENGLAND DECLARES WAR — ALL STAR PRODUCTION.

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Back to the "Old Deal" in Housing

By CAROL ARONOVICI

IN the spring of 1933 social workers, slum dwellers, and the millions of families living in sub-standard homes joined with the building-industry promoters in a chorus of praise of the new deal in housing. Something that looks like a housing program had been inserted in the National Industrial Recovery Act. It was to render the double service of salvaging the bankrupt building industry while it saved hundreds of families from living in the slums.

Under the provisions of the recovery act a Housing Division was created as part of the Public Works Administration. This division was placed under the direction of Robert D. Kohn, a natural leader, a man with broad experience in large-scale building and with a social point of view. It was not long, however, before the vested interests in existing housing raised a cry of unfair competition with legitimate business. Secretary Ickes, to allay this opposition, stated that loans were to be made "only on such projects as are at the present time beyond the reach of unaided private enterprise. Therefore there is no possible danger of competition between government and private industry." But Mr. Ickes was in error; he did not realize that the vested interests of the building industry were threatened, and by the very type of housing that the Housing Division was to promote.

The Housing Division from the very outset was handicapped by the great volume of plans submitted, by the failure of the Public Works Administration to set up satisfactory standards for granting loans, and by the absence of funds and machinery necessary in establishing building standards consistent with existing needs and resources. Mr. Ickes being himself wholly without technical or social knowledge of the essential requirements of low-cost housing, made the task of the director difficult and the final abandonment of the Housing Division inevitable.

As the Housing Division was set up essentially as an instrumentality for developing limited-dividend housing schemes with federal aid, the question of interest rates and amortization periods on federal loans was destined to be the chief factor in establishing rental rates and, in consequence, the level of the income group to be housed in the new dwellings. The 4 per cent interest rate and the twenty-five to thirty-five years of amortization required on loans soon proved that the lower-income groups had no chance of profiting by the new deal in housing. Practically all of the projects approved and finally financed were to rent for around eleven dollars a room, which is about twice the rentals paid under normal economic conditions by self-supporting wage-earners' families, even in New York City where rentals are high. The schemes actually under construction at present, with the exception of those in Atlanta, Georgia, and in the Virgin Islands, were necessarily of the type in which the competition is greatest in the open market. The objection to public financing of this type of housing was therefore well taken. The banks, the insurance companies, the mortgage companies, the building-and-loan associations, and other lending institutions which hold about seventeen billion of the twenty billions of dollars of home mortgages in the United States were thus provided with ample ammunition with which to fight the housing program, if such it may be called.

As far back as October 28, 1933, Mr. Ickes became convinced that "isolated action on the part of individuals" could not be depended upon to initiate comprehensive housing and slum-clearance projects. The next step was therefore the creation of the Federal Housing Emergency Corporation as an executive arm of the PWA, under which a real program of lower-income-group housing could be initiated and carried out either directly by the PWA or through private agencies. This new corporation and its broad purposes were criticized with characteristic vigor by Representative Hamilton Fish of New York as a "concrete example of the socialistic tendencies of the new deal," while the United States Chamber of Commerce was willing to accept the new corporation provided it undertook only "demonstration projects for income groups for which new housing has not hitherto been constructed."

Just how much the opposition to new low-rental housing continued to obstruct the effort to carry out even demonstration projects is only a matter of conjecture. It seemed strange, however, to those interested in the social aspects of housing, that soon after the Federal Housing Emergency Corporation came into being the low-cost housing program was switched to slum clearance and slum clearance alone. This change was made despite the fact that slum clearance is the most complex, the most time-consuming, and the most costly type of housing. No provisions were made for rehousing the families during slum reconstruction nor was any change made in the interest and amortization rate on loans in order to absorb the higher cost of slum clearance as compared with low-cost housing on open land. It is true that under the law a grant of not more than 30 per cent of the cost of labor and materials could be made by the federal government on municipally built and managed housing projects; it was only recently that any indication of the advisability of grants was made public.

Faced with the failure of the housing program the Administration was forced to seek ways of putting the building industry to work without running athwart the mortgage interests, while at the same time using the psychological value of home promotion as a driving force. Thus the National Housing Act was evolved and driven through Congress in its last days. This heralded piece of legislation is in no sense of the word a national housing act. Its more appropriate title would be "A National Mortgage and Loan-Stabilization Act." A brief analysis of the essential provisions of the act will reveal its general purposes.

The first part of the act provides for the creation of a "home-credit insurance corporation" which will insure advances for housing modernization up to $2,000. It also provides insurance for amortized mortgages for old and new owner-occupied homes up to $20,000 in total investment. At the last minute a provision was inserted which provides insurance for large-scale housing up to $10,000,000 per project. For the first time in the Administration's housing ef-

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forts, provision is made for statistical and economic surveys "for the development of housing" and the possible evolution of a more modern and equitable mortgage system. In the second part of the National Housing Act the creation of national mortgage associations is authorized, presumably with the idea that mortgage capital might thus better operate under federal supervision. A Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation is created and made mandatory through the provisions of the third part of the bill, while the last part is devoted to amendments to the law creating the Home Loan Bank, giving it powers to function as a central-discount and mortgage-security control agency.

As legislation in mortgage finance the act has certain merits. Its application may entail delay because of the complex machinery which it sets up and the conflict which it may encounter in various States where mortgage laws are at variance with the provisions of the new federal law.

But let us see how this new law will affect the housing problem in terms of low-rental dwellings for the lower-income families. From the point of view of housing finance, the law provides that interest rates may be fixed at from 5 to 6 per cent or less and that the levy for insurance on mortgages is to be around 1 per cent. If large-scale housing is to be undertaken, this rate of interest with the additional levy for insurance cannot produce low-cost housing. Even with tax exemption and mass production it has been found that the 4 per cent interest rate required by the RFC, with land cost at a minimum consistent with urban realty values, necessitates a rental of about ten to twelve dollars per room. This obviously does not mean low-rental housing. Langdon W. Post, chairman of the New York City Housing Authority, was quoted recently as saying: "I think we can build decent houses that will rent for five dollars per room per month with a combination of federal money, State money, city money, and private capital. We can include private capital—the traditional and instinctive thing in America—if the owners of that capital will forget all about 6 per cent interest or even 5 per cent interest. They will have to be content with 2 per cent interest in gilt-edge investment guaranteed by State and city bonds." With federal bonds paying more than 3 per cent interest, backed by the credit of the United States, it is hard to conceive of investors venturing upon housing projects paying 2 per cent and only insured at from 60 to 80 per cent of the investment. If it is impossible to obtain money at 2 per cent, it will be quite impossible to develop low-cost housing schemes.

While the provision for insuring loans on large-scale housing projects was inserted in the National Housing Act at the last minute, the main emphasis is upon renovation and construction of owner-occupied dwellings. A maximum of $2,000 is to be protected by insurance when loaned for renovation purposes and a maximum of $20,000 is fixed for loans on new construction. Owner occupancy is required for all insurance. This limitation carries us back to the old slogan of home ownership, so fashionable during the Administration of President Hoover, which tied up the savings of so many families now struggling against foreclosure. As a means of improving the condition of slum buildings the $2,000 renovation limit will have no results in improving the condition of slum dwellings, as most dwellers in slum and sub-standard housing are not home owners. Assuming, however, that families living in sub-standard houses also are owners, it is obviously quite unreasonable to expect them to borrow money at 5 or 6 per cent, thus assuming additional burdens in carrying and insurance charges, when they are hardly able to pay the present instalments on their obligations. In addition they must expect that any additional improvements will provide nearly bankrupt municipal governments in many parts of the country with a first-class excuse to levy additional taxes.

The loans on new construction which can be obtained at 5 or 6 per cent under government mortgage insurance will, of course, encourage a certain amount of building, but at this rate of interest plus the mortgage insurance, the inadequately housed low-income families will find it impossible to carry the obligations which such loans would entail. It is unlikely that these loans will result in a great amount of construction; the housing market is already so demoralized and overstocked that better terms could be made by the purchase of existing dwellings than by the building of new homes. This is particularly true in view of the fact that under the NRA a successful effort was made to increase wage scales and the cost of materials.

When objection was raised to the bill on the ground that labor and material were too high it was intimated that an effort would be made to obtain the cooperation of labor in cutting present wage scales in exchange for steady employment. It was also intimated that quantity use of material might result in lower costs. Nothing however has been said about reducing the wages of capital, the most expensive ingredient in housing reform. No cut in wages which would make the work worth doing would approach in value to the home owner the advantage of a 2 per cent interest rate.

Senator Wagner hailed the National Housing Act as a new charter of the home owner against unrestrained avarice. After outlining the bill in one of his radio talks he said: "All this is to be accomplished through the medium of private business, aided by government if necessary, but encouraged above all to stand upon its own feet and contribute as it has in the past the largest share to American prosperity." Here, indeed, is the New Deal fully Hooverized, the home owner doing his bit for American prosperity and private business. It is, of course, understood that the National Housing Act does not take the place of the NRA, the PWA, or the National Housing Emergency Corporation. These are still capable of functioning as the instrumentalities through which a really low-cost housing program might be created. But before the National Housing Act was enacted into law Mr. Ickes hastened to dismantle the Housing Division by transferring most of its personnel to the Emergency Housing Corporation, although refusing to accept the resignation of Robert D. Kohn, its director. The explanation of this refusal is shrouded in implications and innuendoes intended to draw a red herring across the Administration's failure to face a problem which the debt-ridden German, English, Austrian, and other governments have long ago skilfully handled on broad lines of social responsibility.

There is ample legislation and there are ample resources at the disposal of the American government to make low-cost housing one of the cardinal factors in our economic recovery, but if we are to accomplish anything worthy of the name of a national housing program it must be handled with more vision and determination. None has been displayed by the sadly overburdened Secretary Ickes.

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The Labor Outlook in England

By S. K. RATCLIFFE

London, June 10

SINCE the formation of the National Government three years ago the political stagnation of England has been such that the stirrings of the present season have an illusory look of revival. One reason for these activities, slight enough in themselves, is quite simple. The leading members of the Cabinet are getting anxious about the future. They know there is nothing worse for a government than the mistake of overstaying its welcome, and they realize that the general election may come within twelve months. The Liberals announce that, although they are in full opposition to the government, they could not enter into a working arrangement with Labor, even if Labor would agree, which it emphatically will not. That chapter is closed, and its closing is politically important. None of the by-elections so far has given a clear indication of public opinion. The recent contest in West Ham on the eastern rim of London cannot be cited as an exception. It left Fenner Brockway, leader of the I. L. P. remnant, with a poll of 748 votes and a forfeited deposit. But that is merely an illustration of what happens when a once active left-wing organization is split into fragments.

Before coming to the general Labor-Socialist outlook, I will mention without comment three special features of our present situation. The first is the devastation wrought in the political Labor movement by the defection in 1931 of Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden. The second is the emergence of the Socialist League, as a left-wing brigade under the only leadership which, at the moment, enjoys the advantage of provocation and the consequent front page. And the third is the still incalculable black-shirt crusade of Sir Oswald Mosley, which, among other things, as Professor Laski noted the other day, is gaining working-class recruits in certain districts of the distressful North. Our generation, Hitler reminds us, has rediscovered the power of the platform. Mosley is the only prominent man in England who is exploiting it today.

A review of the by-election results would not lead a supporter to the National Government to fear a coming victory for Labor. Any government starting with a huge parliamentary majority expects to lose seats. Labor so far has won a few only; and if the present practice of running two or more Socialist candidates in a constituency is to be continued, the National Government may come within hailing distance of the general election with its great body of members in the House not materially reduced. This maintenance of its parliamentary strength is all the more notable because Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues are without supporters in the popular press. Believe it or not, explain it how you will, here is the fact: there is no single daily paper with a big circulation which is not persistently attacking the government. The present-day position of the British press, in respect of political and national issues, is an unresolved puzzle.

When Mr. MacDonald went over to the enemy he left no successor. This fact was universally admitted. George Lansbury is the nominal leader of the small Labor membership in the Commons. He is 75 years old, and has been absent this year with a broken limb. Arthur Henderson has never been leader, and he is retiring. His place as secretary of the party and director of the machine will probably fall to Arthur Greenwood, Minister of Health in the last Labor Cabinet. He dislikes the House of Commons, and says so frankly. Herbert Morrison, ablest of the metropolitan group, is absorbed in municipal affairs. No other member of the Labor Cabinet can be named as a possible leader: it would be impossible to overstate their ineligibility for the first place; and there is no man prominent in the trade-union world who could head the party in the country. This leaves us with the chairman of the Socialist League, who at present commands the largest measure of press and platform publicity.

Sir Stafford Cripps, son of Lord Parmoor and nephew of Mrs. Sidney Webb, has been solicitor-general. He is a very successful lawyer and an able parliamentarian. He has leapt to the front and is continually in the news by reason of his outspoken declarations of purpose and method. He was the first parliamentary Socialist to announce that if or when the Labor Party returned to office it would use its majority to carry an inclusive emergency powers act for the establishment of a socialist system. From the chair of the Socialist League conference in May Sir Stafford reaffirmed his view, and the resolutions adopted at Leeds are definite as to the steps in the program, to be attained under a five-year plan. "Forward to Socialism" is the manifesto of the League. It is the most challenging document to come out of British Labor since Sidney Webb, sixteen years ago, caught the attention of the world with the logic and eloquence of "Labor and the New Social Order."

Capitalism, say the authors of this pamphlet, moves inexorably towards an ever deepening crisis, and we may be nearing the last opportunity for the people of Britain to use their democratic rights. "The goal is socialism. The time is short. There is no halfway house." What then of the positive program? The Socialist government must secure undisputed control over the vital weapons of economic power. This is stated as an essential prelude to the socialization of industry and its planning. The first positions to be won are finance and the land, while an early political task will be the sweeping away of the House of Lords. Among urgent remedial measures are slum clearance and workers' housing, an enhanced scale of unemployment relief, the abolition of the means test, a forty-hour week, and pensions of $5 a week at the age of 60. The emergency powers act will be available towards the socialization of finance and transport, and the taking over of the mines, electricity, and power. The league proclaims the end of all reformist efforts, and calls upon the party executive for a lead in putting the whole weight of the movement behind the militant policy here outlined.

One needs no more than ordinary knowledge of the Labor movement and the electorate in order to realize that the league and its manifesto mean an increase of the party's difficulties, and a sharpening of the divisions within its own

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ranks, rather than the making of a united front. The mass of the Labor vote is held within the trade unions and the co-operatives, and large sections of these are far from the positions taken up by Sir Stafford Cripps and his associates. Moreover, since the rise of fascism and Nazism there has been a continuous insistence, in resolutions and in the speeches of prominent Labor men, upon the democratic and parliamentary character of British Labor. Every time any one of the older leaders speaks, he comes out against dictatorship in language that is altogether pleasing to Stanley Baldwin as leader of the Conservatives, while Mr. Baldwin on his own part pays tribute to the unions and the workers' benefit societies as bulwarks of the true democracy.

The spokesmen of the Socialist League are earnest in explaining that they do not mean dictatorship or the suspension of Parliament; but every time Sir Stafford Cripps speaks or grants an interview the press underlines his stronger statements, and Labor moderates urge that he ought to be disciplined. H. N. Brailsford, in the most brilliant book as yet produced by the English left wing ("Property or Peace?"), makes a powerful defense of the Socialist League method as an inevitable enforcement of the majority will. His argument, I do not doubt, will carry far. But I am considering here the prospects of Labor in relation to the political factors, to the groups and personalities of the Labor movement itself and the nature of the electorate as displayed during the past decade. And with these things in mind it does not seem possible that the program of "Forward to Socialism" can contribute to a Labor victory in the general election of 1935. True, the party is fast recovering its voting strength. The resentment against the National Government is a rising tide. The position of the Prime Minister under the heel of his Tory colleagues becomes every day more anomalous. But to say these things is not to say that the Labor Party will improve upon its position of 1929 and so achieve power as well as office. Upon the evidence now available, however, there would be nothing extravagant in the guess that after the general election Labor may again be the largest party in the House without a clear majority. That would bring the old dilemma once more: to accept office, or to decline it? The party officials assume that Labor would, without hesitation, decline. The left-wing view, I take it, is that the party leader, whoever he may be, must be ready to face the challenge: to form his Cabinet, shape his policy in bold outline, and upon defeat in the Commons or the Lords, go the country on it. This or something like it is what the first Labor-Socialist Prime Minister would have to do, whatever the size of his party in Parliament. Unless he should have a mind to follow the example of the MacDonald Labor Cabinets; and that, we may be sure, is out of the question.

Rainbow Over the White House

By M. FARMER MURPHY

Washington, July 2

WHEN President Roosevelt sent his message on social reforms to Congress on June 8 it was everywhere appraised as a brilliant political move. In this communication the President briefly commended Congress for the work it had already accomplished, expressed his appreciation of it, and then passed swiftly on to speak of the plans he had in mind for the future. "Among our objectives," he said, "I place the security of the men, women, and children of the nation first." And, being a little more specific, he asserted that for the consideration of the Seventy-fourth Congress there would be advanced "three great objectives, the security of the home, security of livelihood, and the security of social insurance." These it seemed to him were "a minimum of the promise that we can offer to the American people."

What more cheering word, the experts asked, could be carried to the discouraged or dissatisfied millions throughout the country than that? Was there ever a better talking point for Democratic candidates up for reelection? Constituents might complain of the NRA, of the AAA, or of the effect of this or that New Deal measure, but the candidates could brush all that aside and direct their gaze to the rainbow over the White House!

The reasoning seems perfectly sound, yet the very fact that it is sound carries the implication that the things which have so far been done have failed to fill the bill. They have not at any rate brought about that feeling of security for which the masses long or it would not be necessary to promise it for the future.

This is not to deny the truly remarkable accomplishments of the Roosevelt Administration. Like Sheridan at Cedar Creek President Roosevelt turned a retreating, discouraged, and panicky army about and set their faces to the front. By a few bold strokes gallantly executed he changed the attitude of the whole nation from one of despair to hopefulness. Included among these acts were reforms which had been proved and were struggling for expression and others which were in the nature of radical experiments. The power-development project, the truth-in-securities law, the banking-reform act represented only wholesome changes in existing conditions. But the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act were new in conception and their consequences incalculable.

But what some believed they saw then and what the sponsors did not see was that the National Recovery Administration's purposes and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's purposes were mutually antagonistic. And in the crumbling of the NRA which has been going on for several months its original critics find justification for their position. The broad purpose of the NRA was to add to the total purchasing power by shortening hours of labor and increasing wages. It is easily seen that to attain this object it had to be supposed that the industrialists, who had greedily exploited the public for several decades, would become Christians over night and meet the increased cost of production out of their usual profits and accumulations. To induce them thus to act in the general interest the anti-trust laws were suspended for their benefit in order that they might "cooperate." If the industrial world did not meet the increased cost of pro-

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duction out of profits at the previous rate, but tried to recapture the whole of it through higher price and increased profit, then it is obvious that no addition would be made to the sum total of purchasing power but all the increased cost would come out of the public.

It did not take long to demonstrate that this was exactly what the business community proceeded to do. Their cooperation was solely for their own advantage and not for the general welfare. They combined among themselves to raise and fix prices and they manipulated wage scales so that as many workers as possible were thrown into the minimum-wage class. The result has been no increase in total consuming power, complaints about high prices, and endless labor disputes. From the start there has never been a vigorous, determined attempt on the part of the NRA to enforce labor provisions of the codes. Temporizing has been the rule. In every big crisis from the time he gave in to the automobile manufacturers up to the present General Hugh S. Johnson, the administrator, has not cracked down but has himself cracked up.

The problem of the AAA as seen by its administrators was to shorten or eliminate the spread between the price of things the farmer had to sell and the price of things he had to buy. This had become disastrously wide and every increase in tariff rates on agricultural commodities, which the farmer vainly imagined would help him, was matched by a corresponding increase in the tariff on manufactured products, so that even if the farm tariff was effective the disparity remained. The AAA therefore set out to raise the price of farm commodities, in almost every one of which there was a surplus, by a series of plans to restrict production. As an inducement to cooperation by the farmers, in addition to the expected higher prices, rentals or bonuses for the acreage withdrawn were paid. Whether owing to these efforts alone or to these efforts in connection with other natural causes, the price of most farm products has risen and the spread has been slightly lessened. But there has been no substantial gain because, just as in the case of the tariff, the farmer's gain is almost wholly nullified by the higher prices the industrialists obtain through the NRA.

Failure to see to it that these two great experiments having to do with the largest divisions of the national economy should harmonize and work toward a single end may be excused on the ground that they were initiated at the very outset of the Roosevelt Administration when the times were critical and quick action was necessary. Besides, they could not reasonably be abandoned without a chance for fair trial. But between the special session of Congress when they were put into effect and the convening of the regular session in January this year six and a half months elapsed in which it would have been possible to take account of stock and work out a coordinated plan.

Such a scheme however was not presented. Many useful measures were passed by the session just ended. The law regulating stock exchanges will correct serious abuses, the housing plan will assist home owners and remove some of their worries, the revenue act will do away with certain forms of income-tax evasion. The tariff act will give the President, who is fond of fishing, the exhilaration of angling for a world trade which no longer exists. But none of the laws passed went to the fundamentals of the situation. Hence persons who are wholly friendly to the Administration and in full sympathy with the broad humanitarian purposes enunciated by President Roosevelt are asking why the things he now holds out as promises to be fulfilled by the next Congress could not have been got ready for the one which has just expired so that valuable time should not have been lost. Bills covering some of them were already in committee.

The ideas contained in the suggested program are basic. They go to the root of the trouble—security in home, in living, and in old age. But will the means to attain this end be formulated with such care and thoroughness as to exclude the confusion and conflict that have attended the numerous experiments inaugurated during the past year? This is a question which is worrying those who entertain nothing but good will for the Administration, and the reason for it is to be found in the record.

It is now everywhere admitted that the problem of production has been solved and that the acute problem remaining to be solved is that of providing consuming power to balance production. Yet as far as this Congress is concerned it is a question to which no serious forward-looking attention has been given. All the talk has been of stimulating industrial production. Although the banks are choked with funds which they can't or won't lend, a bill was passed at the last session of Congress providing more than $500,000,000 additional money for loans to industry through the Federal Reserve Banks and Reconstruction Finance Corporation. More is added to too much. It was pretty well demonstrated by reports of retail sales, which are regarded as a good index, that the Civil Works Administration and the AAA through its bonuses were the only operations which gave substantial impetus to business; therefore the failure to devote more attention to the stimulation of consumption is rather surprising. The CWA and the AAA bonuses were antidotes for the higher prices created by the NRA and by the AAA's own crop-restriction plans. But the CWA as such was abandoned and the fundamental task which it had been performing of providing more consuming power was thrown back upon direct-relief agencies.

No intelligent person of humanitarian impulses would think for a moment of a relapse into the old order. All in that category welcome and acclaim President Roosevelt's recognition of the vital need of security—the removal of the deadly fear of want which oppresses so many millions of human beings—and they ardently desire to go forward with him. But they hope he will pull together into an orderly system the disjointed operations now in force before he is overwhelmed by the confusion and cross-purpose.

Likewise it is hoped that his three great objectives, "security of the home, security of livelihood, and the security of social insurance," will be reached by methods which take into account the entire social and economic structure so that the plan may work without friction and the results may endure.

[*This is the first of a series of Washington letters to be contributed during the next two months by various observers of the national political scene. The next article, by Mildred Adams, will discuss the effects of the New Deal on the social and psychological atmosphere of Washington.*]

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This Way Out

Suicide and the Depression

By MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD

A MAN whose little boy was dying in Pasadena tried in vain to borrow ten dollars from the Brooklyn police to telephone the child and let him hear his father's voice once more. A week later he was found asphyxiated in a lodging-house room, a letter on his lap from his wife telling of the child's death. . . . "I have walked the streets for days trying to find employment. I have been cold and hungry so long I am at the end of the trail," a man wrote to the coroner just before he took poison. . . . Two jobless brothers who had been cut off from relief funds for three weeks and had eaten practically nothing turned on the gas and were found unconscious by the police. . . . The father of nine children, with no food in the house, spent his last fifty cents for poison. . . . An unemployed longshoreman walked a hundred miles for a promised job, only to lose it; rather than return to face his family he jumped in front of a moving train. . . . Two American artists in Paris who could not pay their bills slashed their wrists and were found dead. . . . An eighteen-year-old girl who had to leave college and then could not find a job went to the country and shot herself. . . . A jobless musician tramping the roads in December in Colorado took off his clothes and tried to freeze to death. . . . A girl of seventeen whose fiance, an unemployed plumber, had been forced for the third time to postpone their marriage, took poison and died as the New Year came in. . . . "I know my wife needs me, but under present conditions she will be better off without me," wrote a jobless restaurant worker (whose young wife had had to leave her own position because of approaching motherhood), just before he jumped seven floors to the street. . . . A broker who had lost his family's fortune as well as his own in the stock market sat before a mirror and put a bullet through his brain. . . . An official of a big oil company shot himself; a month's search failed to find any property for his widow. . . . An unemployed clerk borrowed the key to a woman friend's apartment to go and cook himself a meal; instead, he turned on the gas. . . . A stenographer, thirty-five years old, out of work for two months and penniless, died horribly by soaking her clothes in benzine and setting fire to herself in a vacant lot. . . . A hospital maid lost her job; her husband, a cook, had long been out of work; she hanged herself. . . . An actor shot himself, leaving a note stating that he was out of funds and employment. . . . A man of fifty-five, his fortune gone, unable to find work for nearly a year, killed himself by running directly in front of a speeding ambulance. . . . A former millionaire, who used to make tires for Henry Ford, shot himself in his laboratory. . . . A couple lost all their savings in an automobile-camp venture; on Christmas Day the wife took poison and died. . . . A boy evicted from his room for non-payment of rent died in the police station of poison. . . . An unemployed school teacher took his portable phonograph to a park, turned on the "Moonlight Sonata," and slashed his wrists. . . . On a body fished out of San Francisco Bay was found this note: "This is just the case of an old man, seventy-six years, very sick and in terrible pain, and also very poor. I am trying to reach some hospital. If I cannot, I will try to go out the other way." A postscript told the story: "The hospital said 'No.'" No one claimed his body.

These are "depression suicides," traceable entirely to the present economic crisis. Dr. Frederick L. Hoffman states categorically: "During periods of financial and industrial distress the suicide rate invariably shows a tendency to increase"; and goes on to prove it by correlative tables of business failures and suicides from 1900 to 1926, as well as by his later annual reports. Dr. Louis I. Dublin confirms this; he says that the rate fluctuates with the business cycle, decreasing in times of prosperity and increasing in hard times. A study of suicides in Seattle, published in the *Unemployed Citizen,* presented figures indicating that though there were about 70 per cent more suicides in the county in 1932 than in 1929, those ascribed entirely to economic and financial causes were nearly four times as many. Edmund Wilson noted the same tendency in a study made in San Diego in 1931. Some surveys, such as that of the New York Health Department, seem to show no such close correlation; but Hoffman's statistics, covering the country as a whole and for long periods, on the whole bear out his and Dublin's contention. As Dr. Ruth Shonle Cavan says in her book, "Suicide," "when the crucial situation cannot be resolved in some way which permits the person to continue to lead an efficient, normal life, the force of the thwarted interests may lead to types of behavior which are injurious"—or fatal.

Dr. James M. Williams, in his recent work, "Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief," published through the University of North Carolina but based on conditions in New York State, remarks especially upon the coincidence of increases in unemployment and suicide. He gives several case histories, one of which is especially revealing:

> A young man went to the public-welfare office of a large city for assistance and was told that he would be given work relief. The man remarked that he had an injured side and could not do that work. An investigation disclosed that he had shot himself and was only recently out of the hospital. . . . The manager reproached him for being so lacking in backbone as to try to take his life, and the young man replied: "I determined to kill myself rather than come to this."

We all suffer in one way or another from the depression, but we do not all kill ourselves in consequence. Therefore it becomes of interest, if we are to do anything to prevent the increase of suicide, to discover just what kind of people do find death the only way out of their difficulties. With this in mind, for a year I have made a study of all reported suicides and attempted suicides in a large Western city. (This city is situated in a State where attempted suicide is not a criminal offense, and hence there is no effort to hide unsuccessful attempts; these, of course, bear as directly on

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the problem, so far as motivation is concerned, as do the—perhaps more fortunate—successful efforts.) The analysis of the data thus secured reveals some very significant findings.

There are in my collection 252 suicides and attempted suicides. Giving the other side in every case the benefit of the doubt, 83 of these, or about 32½ per cent, are specifically and obviously due to the current depression. They include men and women long out of work and frequently penniless, the wives of jobless men with hungry children, people who have been prosperous and have lost everything, a few old people unwilling to become dependents. I have classified them as to sex, age, and occupation.

In general, in Europe and America, from 25 to 33 women kill themselves to every 100 men. In the 252 cases of my study about 46 per cent were women; I ascribe this figure primarily to the fact that I have included unsuccessful attempts. Apparently women are not so efficient as men in committing suicide; and I also suspect that a good many girls swallow a little poison or turn on the gas when they are pretty certain of being discovered in time. This tendency probably accounts also for the fact that among the 169 cases not attributable to the economic situation—mainly the effects of illness or of that strange disease called love—women actually made up 57 per cent of the total. In the strictly depression cases 27 per cent were women, rather below than above the general average. As William J. Fielding puts it, "Plain, unvarnished misery drives many people to suicide, and women for various reasons seem to bear misery better than men." I should add that in the State under study men outnumber women by 107.6 to 100, the ninth highest rate in the nation.

In America during recent years the incidence of suicide has tended to rise regularly with older age-groups up to the very aged. The average age of suicides of both sexes in New York State in 1924 was 45. The figures in my study show an average age of 42.5 for all the cases (these included a boy and a girl of 15, but also a woman of 83 and several over 75), with the low average of 40 for the non-depression suicides, and the rather high one of 46.6 for the depression suicides. This correlates well with the age-groups of the general population of the States, which, like the general population of the country, shows its greatest population in the age-group 35 to 44, but which has a smaller proportion of children than many States, the second most numerous group being 45 to 54. The general impression gained from the survey is that depression suicides occur mainly in two age-classes: first of all, middle-aged or elderly people who have no hope for future employment; second, quite young people who meet nothing but rebuffs and discouragement as they begin to face life.

The occupation analysis is also most interesting. It may be summed up in a brief table, omitting about 1 per cent who were students (naturally, non-economic suicides or attempts), and classifying non-self-supporting women according to the economic or social status of their husbands or nearest relatives.

	Common Laborers	*Skilled Workers*	*Business and Professional*
Depression	35	17	48
Non-depression	45	15	39
All cases	41	16	42

This indicates one thing very clearly: it is not the skilled workers who are killing themselves because of unemployment; it is not the common laborers; it is the business and professional people. The rate for the professions, especially for medicine and law, has always been high in all places; but the rate in most business occupations in good times is low. As Dr. Cavan says: "People may be inured to poverty; they may be born and bred to poverty. . . . [They] became pauperized, they became accustomed to living on the ragged edge and perhaps depending on charitable agencies for relief. To such people poverty presents no crisis." Yet it is true that even such people in times of great depression show an increase in the suicide rate; S. de Jastrzebski, formerly Assistant Registrar General of Great Britain, remarks that "the rate for unoccupied males in England and Wales is enormously greater than for those who are occupied." But as a whole the breaking-point comes when people who have been accustomed to comfort are reduced to extreme hardship, with the added connotation of personal failure, bred into us by our training in "rugged individualism." Dr. Ruth Burr, in her chapter on suicide in the symposium "Our Neurotic Age," sums it up by saying:

> Those who have always lived in poverty accept their condition more philosophically than those who have had much more and are then suddenly deprived of the means of keeping up to former standards. In the United States, where the standard of living has been higher, it is more difficult for individuals to adjust to the present economic crisis. . . . The present economic instability is a threat to all regardless of the individual's status.

Such a crisis exacerbates other conflicts, emotional, domestic, or personal. The wife of a man whose case I studied taunted him about a physical defect; he rushed out of the room and swallowed poison. He had been jobless for months and left his widow penniless; any extra trifle was simply too much. Very few suicides have merely one definite cause; if there are such, they are the cases motivated by loss of employment, hunger, and deprivation. In an unfortunately wide experience of suicide among my own friends and acquaintances, I have always been able to adduce a number of reasons for the act. Usually suicide is a cumulative response. For this reason, doubtless many of the cases I included in the non-depression group were actually due in part to economic worries and hardships; without these factors the given actuating cause might have operated in some other way.

In other words, when we ask what kind of people kill themselves in a depression, the only answer is, "Our kind." These men and women were for the most part native-born Americans of native parentage; the typical suicide of this group was above the average in education and training, in early middle age, married, in fairly good health, not notably neurotic or unstable, judging from the kind of work he had done and his quiet and calm arrangements for death. Very few were drunkards, still fewer could be suspected of insanity except by theologically minded people who consider all suicide insane as well as blasphemous. But in general the suicide was a man of sensitive, though not unbalanced, make-up, who had worked hard and well, had achieved some success and prosperity, had been unemployed for a long time, and had reached an age when his intelligence made it plain that he was henceforth unemployable. There would have

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been no use in telling him that our social system is rotten, ripe for change, and that better days are coming afterwards. He was too old to fight or to wait.

To claim that *every* suicide is an example of diseased egoism, of a desire to cause pain to others and avenge the subject's own suffering, is not true. There are suicides which are a kindness to others; many suicides represent the only solution of what one girl in her last note called "a deplorable situation." An obscure man, who may himself be dead by now for all I know, wrote this to the correspondence column of a newspaper:

> Most of these people have taken their lives after definite planning. They have looked at their predicament from all angles. They found no solution save one. And they took it. . . . It is much easier to prohibit the sale of firearms than to look for the real cause and try to remedy that. We refuse to consider the endless pacing of streets in search of work, the pitiful conditions of hungry children, the quiet acquiescence of sick mothers, the loss of small fortunes. . . . Too many temporary relief measures and not enough attempt to remedy the basic evils is our trouble.

And when our "trouble" gets beyond our private means to cope with it, an appreciable number of us will—whatever the psychoanalysts may have to say about our ultimate hidden motives—decide that no one is ever cold, or hungry, or homeless, or in despair when he is safely dead.

Children's Books in Soviet Russia

By LYDIA NADEJENA

I WENT with a teacher and one of his pupils, a lad from the Chukchi tribe of North Siberia, to the government bookstore. The boy was going home to the Arctic regions, and was bent on taking some books back with him. Two years of study at the Leningrad University for Northern Peoples had whetted his own appetite for books, and his little friends at home, who had also learned to read, kept writing to him asking him to bring "lots and lots" of new books with him.

Churka, the Chukchi boy, was excited. He looked eagerly for the right books both in Russian and in his native tongue. His teacher and I were excited too. We thought of how those jolly, colorful books would travel first by train for three long weeks, and then on sleds hauled by dogs hundreds of miles on and on into the north, beyond the Arctic Circle. What fun for the Chukchi children, who until recent times had never in all the history of Russia been taught to read a book, who very likely had never even set eyes on one.

Suddenly Churka cried out: "That's it!" And he showed us a book, "Hunting," by the well-known artist Lebedev. It is just a picture-book with no text of any kind, but Lebedev's illustrations are so brilliant and clear, so full of life and movement, that any printed commentary would be superfluous. The subject is treated ethnologically—hunting as it is practiced by various people in different lands; and the whole book is calculated to make the most vivid appeal to the adventurous spirit and imagination of young readers, especially to those whose very existence depends on hunting. Churka was delighted. He knew his people would like this book. In it they would see themselves hunting and be able to compare their ways with those of the hunters of other lands.

He found another book, "Yesterday and Today," by Marshak, Russia's best modern writer of verse for children. It is illustrated by the same artist, Lebedev, and it contrasts the oil lamps, pens, inkwells, and tallow candles of yesterday with the electric lights and typewriters of today. Churka wanted a travel book, too, and he picked out Marshak's delightful story "The Mail," which shows in a very amusing and informing fashion the journey of a letter which tried to catch up with a man who was traveling round the world. Missing him in Leningrad, Berlin, London, and Brazil, the letter finally reached him when he had returned to Leningrad. The salient characteristics of each country are brought out with delicate humor. The verses have the simplicity and clarity of folk-songs. Churka put aside that book together with another bearing the irresistible title "Travels of Charlie Chaplin," which teaches the child-reader various means of communication, and is illustrated in a vivid and most amusing way by G. and O. Chichagovs.

Since 1917 children all over Russia have been "looking for books." And Soviet educators and teachers, the best writers of children's stories and verse, and many of the foremost artists have been busy creating a new juvenile literature. It was only after a period of experimentation that they realized what the children needed. They found that Soviet children, like all other children, take a healthy interest in happy, not sentimental, truly dramatic stories; they want stories that deal with realities, not fantastic and remote bed-time tales.

In tracing the growth and evolution of juvenile literature in Soviet Russia since the revolution one is at once struck by the progress in child education. In 1914-15 only 4,793,398 children were being taught in Russian elementary schools of all categories; now there are more than 24,000,000 pupils. There are 7,000,000 children in various pre-school institutions, which were hardly known in pre-revolutionary Russia. In three years, 1929 to 1931, the number of new works published for children increased from 70 to 500. And the demand for children's literature is so great that from time to time it even produces a shortage of paper. The records of the "Gosizdat" (State publishing house) show that some children's books with a first impression of from 10,000 to 50,000 copies were rapidly sold out in the course of a few days in cities like Moscow or Leningrad alone. In fact, the demand for children's books became so imperative that a special state publishing house for juvenile literature was lately founded, having a definite program, and organized according to subject matter and the readers' age.

The development of this *genre littéraire* has followed all the vicissitudes of the great struggle in Russia. Immediately after the revolution came a complete repudiation of

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the old "juvenile literature"—stories with a moral purpose, which dealt mostly with such themes as jealousy, infidelity, deceit, and knavery, and too often failed to present them in terms the child could understand. Even the ancient fairy tales and Russian folklore were excluded. During the civil-war period the professional writers of those days endeavored to reflect in their books for juveniles the actuality of that crumbling and chaotic environment. Soon, however, they began to realize that such literature represented a blundering misuse of revolutionary material, in which grown-ups chose their own themes and served them up to the child without regard to his psychology and sensibilities. The Soviet child simply was not "taken" by this kind of literature, and it was the realization of this fact that brought about in great measure a reversal of method and a new slogan. Instead of "literature for children," Soviet Russia must create "children's literature." When Maxim Gorki was asked what was the most desirable type of children's stories, he replied that the stories must be told in a way that was amusing to children, not to grown-ups, and that to make a story or a book amusing for children "we must realize that we ourselves have much to learn from the children."

In order to learn from the children it was necessary to establish a proper contact with them. This was done through the Soviet Literary Guild, which has a special section for juvenile literature. Authorities in various fields of science were invited to participate. Specialists supplied correct informative material; to make this material readable and appealing to the child, the collaboration of outstanding professional writers and artists was obtained, with admirable and novel results.

It is important to realize that the authors of children's books in Soviet Russia are not detached and isolated writers, obliged to please publishers who are concerned mainly with the question whether or not a book is marketable. The only object is to please the child. Soviet authors gather in the Children's Section of the Literary Guild, where each author reads his individual work; then it is discussed from the point of view of its subject matter, the form in which it is presented, its language, its illustrations. Sometimes after a series of readings and heated, typically Russian discussions, the new work, ready for publication, is taken to various schools, to so-called "juvenile-literature matinees." There the author reads the book to groups of children of various ages, notes their reaction, and discusses it freely with them. Having learned the children's reactions, he then completes, corrects, or recasts his book accordingly. And these juvenile literary matinees are not dry, laboratory experiments in psychology; they are gay and amusing performances in which the children take a very active part.

In Russia vital contact has been set up between authors and children. Soviet pedologists and authors have learned many things from children and have drawn some valuable conclusions. They have realized that it is just as important for the Soviet child to learn how to use his imagination as it is for him to learn how to measure things. They also soon found out that in order to appeal to a child's mind, a book or a story dealing with a popular scientific theme must be not merely correct but also artistic and moving. Realizing the importance of creating literature of this kind, the authorities "mobilized on the children's literary front"—to use the characteristic Soviet phraseology—not only the best Soviet pedologists, writers, and artists, but also engineers, chemists, doctors, and technological specialists of every kind.

The eager and earnest search for an adequate children's literature has finally brought about the readmission of the old classics and folk-tales of Russia, whose rich yet naive language, striking use of metaphor, and imaginative qualities are now again fully appreciated in Soviet Russia. In order to broaden the mental horizon of Soviet children and give them knowledge of the world at large and of life in foreign lands, a great many foreign classics have been published lately, including the work of such authors as Jules Verne, Charles Dickens, and Fenimore Cooper.

Especially brilliant results have been achieved in illustrated poetry for children. This may be seen at its best in the combined works of the poet Marshak and the artist Lebedev, or in the works of Chukovsky and Annenkov, in Charushin's animal books illustrated by the author, and in many other poetic stories, in which the text illustrates the pictures or vice versa.

In the Driftway

THE Drifter believes in signs. They often reveal the essential characteristics of a people or of a countryside more clearly and much more amusingly than the guidebooks do—making exceptions of course for such a billboard as the Drifter recently encountered in New England. It was so enormous that it hid from his view practically all of the State of Rhode Island which is said to be very lovely. By studying signs the traveler can learn very quickly the habits of a nation, particularly the bad habits which are always the most interesting to the folks back home. A homely old maid alone in France could bring home tales that would set the town by its ears if she but made a careful—and not too innocent—study of French signs, especially those beginning "Défense de—." And her tales would be fairly accurate even though they covered only one aspect of French life. For obviously the behavior forbidden by signs is that which is habitual and common, or the signs would not be necessary—and by the same token no independent people is to be restrained from their habitual and common behavior merely by signs. A list of a nation's signs would more or less coincide with a list of its native customs.

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CONSIDER, for instance, the lurid and bizarre picture a Frenchman could take home after a similar careful study of American signs. He would discover that we are a nation of spitters, that we like to smoke in subway stations, that we dump rubbish where the most beautiful view is to be had, that we steal flowers and dig up the grass in public parks, that we feed the animals in zoos even though it may make them sick, that for some reason we stick our arms and heads out of street-car windows and park in front of fire hydrants. Our driving habits are perhaps the most insane of all. We pass cars on curves and never willingly slow down at street intersections, though we may have read in our newspaper (which we have just dropped on the sidewalk) that something like 33,000 people are killed every year in automobile accidents. And the Frenchman might be as

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amazed as the Drifter was upon discovering the sign that hangs over a counter full of slippery fish in one of the foreign sections of New York City. It reads: Please Do Not Handle the Goods.

* * * * *

IT is a good game, this game of signs. The Drifter has been playing it for years. He finds an amusing or a sad or an intriguing new sign almost every week, and they are all enlightening. On his recent foray into New England, though he missed Rhode Island, he found several signs that gave him something to think about. He became deeply interested in the character of a filling-station proprietor in Connecticut. The filling station was once a barn and it is still surrounded by hundreds of acres of peaceful, sparsely settled pastures, wood, and meadow-land, all of which lent piquancy to a home-made sign which offered what may be Yankee hospitality in large black type: FREE PARKING. He found out what a low opinion New Bedford has of motor tourists by reading the rather testy sign posted on the outskirts of that ancient town of whales and sea captains. "New Bedford," it announces, "Has Narrow Streets, Short Blocks, Blind Corners. Drive Slowly." And the Drifter could not leave the subject of signs without mentioning his favorite, and famous, example which never fails to expand his mind and excite his imagination. It is that sign in Siasconset on a road leading down to the sea which reads: "South Gulley Road. Spain: Portugal: 3,000 Miles."

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

In Defense of Pharmacy

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The article, What Is Left of the Drug Business, by Oscar Lerner in your May 23 issue is unrecognizable as part of a series of articles on the professions and the depression and contains several glaring errors of fact.

"The Costs of Medicines" by Rorem and Fischelis, published in 1932, gives the number of chain drug stores as approximately 4,000 by 1929. "The Merchandising of Drug Products" by Paul Olsen, published in 1931, gives the number of chain drug stores as approximately 4,000, therefore, showing no appreciable growth during the first part of the depression. Olsen further states that 40 per cent of the chain drug stores are operated or controlled by four companies, the L. K. Liggett Company, the Walgreen Company, the Whelan Drug Company of New York, and the Peoples Drug Stores of Washington. In the last year Liggetts, largest chain of them all, the Whelan Drug Company, the Owl Drug Company, largest drug chain on the Pacific Coast, and the Mayflower chain all have been in bankruptcy while the total sales of the Peoples Drug Company for the first eleven months of 1933 show a decline of 4.5 per cent from the same period of 1932. How can Oscar Lerner say that chain drug stores have grown during the depression?

"The Costs of Medicines" says that the number of new students entering pharmacy courses annually has been nearly uniform in the past ten years and that the number of graduates is approximately 2,700 per annum. One new graduate to every 45,000 population is surely not any more than enough to take care of the death rate. Further, in 1932 the majority of colleges of pharmacy changed over from a minimum three-year course to a minimum four-year course, which means that next year there will be no graduating classes from these schools. Where is this evidence of "grinding out graduates"?

Defining the status of the druggist, Oscar Lerner says: "One can only say that he is a professional man with virtually no profession to practice." Every graduate of the School of Pharmacy of George Washington University for the past seven years is employed or owns his own pharmacy. The complete class of 1933 of Purdue School of Pharmacy has found work in several congenial branches of the drug industry. In Birmingham, Alabama, a man who is not a druggist at all conceived the idea of opening a drug store which does nothing but fill prescriptions and after a few years he is filling 75 per cent of all the prescriptions in his town. In Calumet, Michigan, Clarice Abrams, a young girl only two years out of college, is making a big business success of a prescription shop on the second floor of a building.

What Is Left of the Drug Business discussed a business, not the profession of pharmacy. Those who have degraded pharmacy to the level of a self-serving business now complain about the depression as all other business men do. They have brought it on their own heads for business is a competitive game of profit-making and not a cooperative way of promoting human welfare, while the first function of pharmacy is a promotion of human welfare.

New Haven, Conn., June 25 H. J. FULLER

The Wilds, Parkways, and Dollars

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The public press of June 14 carried the announcement that the location of the proposed connecting highway between the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, carrying an estimated cost of $54,000,000, had been determined by the committee appointed by Secretary Ickes, and that it awaits his approval.

Knowing that certain advocates of the parkway have pressed for a location upon the crest or near-crest of the Appalachian Mountains for the entire distance, I am moved, lest the committee's recommendation be for the high-level route, to voice the protests and counter-recommendation of a large body of nature lovers and conservationists who would keep the upper slopes of this range inviolate.

There is no accessible wilderness in Eastern America comparable in its extent, or in its primeval character, to this range. Those who would escape the din and rush of the machine age must plunge deeply into some natural environment. They know that they must place miles between themselves and the last house, railroad, and highway before the insulation becomes complete and the spell and peace of the wilderness can be felt. Those who have experienced this know the blasting effect of roads upon the wilderness, and that the "wilderness" seen from the motorcar is but the shell of the wilderness felt from the footpath. The form remains, but the intimate, fresh, pulsating throb of the wilds is gone.

The finest flower of the wilderness is necessarily its heart, that portion farthest removed from its antipode, the world of man. A skyline highway not only destroys the finest of the primeval heritage, but, in shooting civilization through its middle, halves the pitiful remnants of these pioneer solitudes which have been left us.

For the motorist an unending succession of wide-flung views grows terribly monotonous. I am convinced of this and it

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was the conclusion of a high official of the National Park Service after studying the reactions of tourists in the Western parks. A high-level route would be dangerous, with fog in all seasons, and sleet and snow in winter.

Without advocating a route through the Great Valley of eastern Tennessee, but citing it because it is more familiar to me, I know that in the park-like expanses of its wide valleys and lower slopes, with its winding, crystalline rivers, its exquisite scenes of pastoral quiet and its sudden vistas of the great, blue uplift of the mountains themselves, there is a vast and bewitching beauty, containing all the "ambuscades and surprises" of the hill country. This valley region has already been marked by man, and a magnificent parkway, routed to reveal its beauty, would enhance, and not ravage, its loveliness.

The initial cost of a skyline highway is staggering, when it is remembered that there are thousands of communities still in the mud. Here is proposed a luxury road of concrete while many are yet denied gravel, and other half-completed road projects languish for lack of funds. The upkeep which would be borne by the Park Service would be huge, and in the days of balanced budgets which lie ahead, might be met at the expense of primary services for the prevention and suppression of forest fires, which always confront this agency.

The fate of one of the few remaining Eastern wildernesses lies in the hands of Secretary Ickes.

Knoxville, Tenn., June 23 HARVEY BROOME

Hearst Would Honor Local Boy

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Mr. Hearst's eminent San Francisco *Examiner* comes to the front again by demanding that the citizens of California name the magnificent San Francisco Bay Bridge, now far along in its construction, after the late Governor "Jimmy" Rolph. The *Examiner* is devoting an absurd amount of space to its civic crusade to offset the *Chronicle's* (opposition) attempt to erect some sort of a granite statue in Golden Gate Park in memory of the same local boy who made (pretty) good.

For the citizens of California to name their prize monument to mankind's ingenuity after Mr. Rolph would be one of the silliest bits of "progress" ever accomplished in the commonwealth. Rolph, a third rate politician at best ("those glorious citizens of San José . . . I should turn loose all kidnappers to face a similar fate . . ."), deserves, perhaps, a nice statue in the park. But the name of the great span should remain "The San Francisco Bay Bridge," something that both Native Sons and fellow Americans will understand in fifty years' time.

San Francisco, June 8 WILLIAM HOGAN

Free Jan Wittenber

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Jan Wittenber, prominent artist and one of the founders of the Chicago John Reed Club, is held in Southern Illinois on charges of conspiracy to overthrow the United States Government. Together with ten others who were arrested for organizing the unemployed, he is held under the Illinois criminal syndicalist law which has been on the statute books since the Palmer red raids.

Wittenber was arrested on May 31 and beaten and dragged out of the courtroom. He is on the fifth day of a hunger strike against the vicious treatment and exorbitant bail.

The prisoners will remain in jail till November, when the Grand Jury meets, unless a protest campaign frees them. Telegrams demanding their release should be sent to Sheriff Saathoff, Hillsboro, Illinois, and to Governor Horner.

New York City, June 23

NATIONAL BOARD JOHN REED CLUBS
Joseph Freeman, Louis Lozowick, Oakley Johnson, Hugo Gellert.

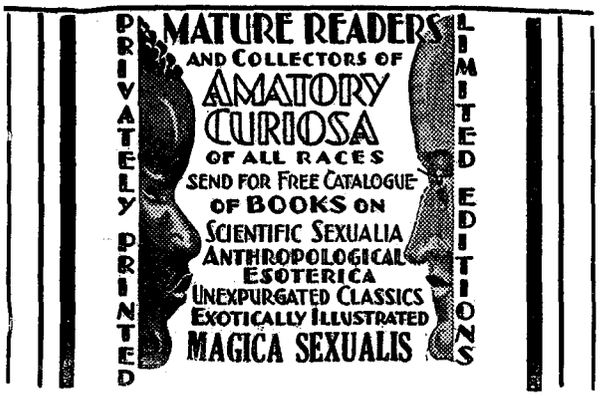
Hugo Gellert to Anita Brenner

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

No, my book, "Karl Marx' 'Capital' in Lithographs," does not make Anita Brenner "feel the need to partake in the action of the formula 'Workers of the world unite'." Certainly it did make her hysterical in your issue of June 27. A better balanced reviewer might have tried to prove her assertions. In this book, thousands of pages of Marx's monumental work are reduced to sixty. It is obvious that these selections would either qualify or disqualify me on the basis of concrete proof—the printed word. But Miss Brenner shies clear of this opportunity. Therefore her remark that "this is a job that requires clear political thinking, a thorough, realistic historical knowledge . . ." is a boomerang. Since I'm restricted, space does not permit me to do more than point out several of the most glaring untruths which characterize her review.

She says: "Gellert believes that to be a Marxist automatically solves every intellectual problem—I have heard him say this." Not true! I do not believe that—therefore I never said it. Further, "If Hugo Gellert were not a Communist he

RACIAL ARTS OF LOVE



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would be a successful commercial illustrator." Why the "if"? When he did do commercial work, his drawings were reprinted and exhibited as outstanding examples of commercial art. That is what Miss Brenner would call "successful," is it not?

Besides architecture (skyscrapers) there is another field of art activity in which the United States excels: advertising propaganda. And everyone knows, save an art critic pumped full of aesthetics, that its primary requirements are, precisely, the "mastery of propaganda technique . . . and the ability to translate . . . into telling concepts and designs."

The love of lithograph crayon and the gusto with which it is spread over the crispy surface is "flashy, academic technique" for Miss Brenner. And when she jumps to the "catacombs" and then back again to the "magazine covers" of today, she is plainly rattled. She cannot fit the work into the musty old art-catalogue.

A propos "the forcing of peasants off the land . . . Gellert draws a full page picture of a pair of sheep!" Most readers have imagination. I thought that a picture of the aim and result of the expropriation sufficed. However, let Miss Brenner turn three pages in the same chapter and she will find a picture of a peasant family in the process of eviction; the home burning, the Scot tiller of the soil swears vengeance.

"Marx describes the brutal subjection of the American and other aborigines; Gellert draws a full-sized Christ on a cross!" Is that all? Miss Brenner would do well to look again. I wish I could reprint that picture. It shows a sword. On its hilt a crucified human. The sword's point drips with blood. The implication—Christian colonial expansion at the point of the sword.

We who "wear the uniform of Stalin's Red Army" cannot hope for competent criticism from a Trotzkyite. But is accurate and reliable reporting too much to expect? Miss Brenner, who juggles words so glibly about "science—comprehension and mastery of historical, sociological, and psychological principles," can neither hear nor see straight! The ultra-revolutionary palaver of a lady writer of the New York *Times* coupling me with Rivera "with one foot on the other side of the barricades," is too absurd for consideration.

New York, July 2 HUGO GELLERT

Philosophers Again

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

We were interested to see the editorial in the June 6 issue of *The Nation* referring to the brief sketches on philosophers in a recent *Pen and Hammer* bulletin.

The Nation calls itself an organ of liberal opinion. We wonder how it can do this and yet honestly maintain that the intellectual should stand on every side in controversial issues. Do you believe intellectuals should be fascists as well as liberals or Marxists? The title of the bulletin article, Philosophical Serenity, was ironical. The article, we think, clearly indicated that philosophers have not shown this serenity, this impartiality—that they are in fact participants in social conflicts and nearly always on the side of vested interests.

It is precisely because the philosopher, far from showing aloofness, indorsed the violence of imperialist war, and, to quote your words, showed "a sad lack of that sense of fair play, that reasonable perspective, even of that simple decency which it is the special function of the intellectual to encourage," that we pointed out the shockingly reactionary role of those who professedly "contemplate all time and all existence." Instead of maintaining, as you seem to allege that we maintained, that the intellectual "is to concern himself with public affairs only when he happens to be on a particular side," we wrote that the philosopher's "speculation represents the social position of the philosopher and his attempt to maintain his traditional status in the face of a changing society."

The Nation unmistakably implies that the philosopher should know the truth but should not do anything about it. Would *The Nation* itself practice such a doctrine? We are attacking conventional philosophers not for their serenity or lack of serenity, but for their frequent social ignorance—which deprives them of the very function *The Nation* allows them—and their defense of any institution because it is traditional. *The Nation* may deny the class struggle, but when philosophers suspect that "justice and social equilibrium demand inequality and concentration of power and the submission of the masses" (Jeffery Smith, *Journal of Philosophy*, March 1, 1934, p. 128) they show both that they clearly recognize the class struggle and on which side they stand.

To sum up, we maintain that philosophers, in embracing materialism or idealism, or any other "ism," in advocating this or that view of the world and man, are in their own way taking part in social conflicts, upholding or attacking the existing order, and that when they come to act or speak openly they are expressing the consequences of their philosophy and hence of their basic social attitudes.

New York, June 10 SAMUEL ORLINICK,
Pen and Hammer Philosophy Committee

Contributors to This Issue

CAROL ARONOVICI has been engaged in housing and town-planning work for about twenty-five years. At present he is lecturer on urbanism and housing at the Columbia University School of Architecture and director of housing-research projects under the auspices of the New York Housing Authority.

S. K. RATCLIFFE, British publicist and lecturer, is a regular contributor to the London *Spectator*.

M. FARMER MURPHY is a Washington correspondent of long standing, formerly of the Baltimore *Sun*.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD is a California newspaperwoman.

LYDIA NADEJENA, formerly art editor of *Russky Golos* (New York), is a frequent contributor to that newspaper.

MARYA ZATURENSKA is a New York poet who will shortly publish a volume of verse to be entitled "Threshold and Hearth."

SHERWOOD ANDERSON, author of "Winesburg, Ohio," "Dark Laughter," and other works, edits the *News* in Marion, Virginia.

MARK VAN DOREN is well known as critic, editor, and poet.

JAMES BURNHAM, professor of philosophy at Washington Square College, New York University, is one of the editors of *Symposium* and the author of "Philosophical Analysis."

BENJAMIN HORRACE HIBBARD, author of "Marketing Agricultural Products," is professor of agricultural economics at the University of Wisconsin.

BABETTE DEUTSCH is a poet and critic whose most recent book is "Mask of Silenus: A Novel About Socrates."

ERNEST BOYD is an editor of the *American Spectator*.

B. B. KENDRICK is professor of history at the North Carolina College for Women, and is coauthor with Louis M. Hacker of "The United States Since 1865."

LEONARD AMSTER is at work on a novel.

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Books

Benediction in Midsummer

By MARYA ZATURENSKA

Peace on the walls, peace on the air you breathe,
O little house who breasts the dark midsummer,
Bright on the threshold, graceful on the door,
Enter, O cool-eyed peace and stay forever.

Your holy city build with silver walls,
With music let all voices slowly enter,
Pervade the walls, like sunlight and like rain,
Cool the parched heart that yearns for quietness.

Seal up the windows, and in every room
Leave your inviolate sign, so there will be
But light and hope with courage ever-shining
And summer moving to a perfect end.

Paying for Old Sins

Stars Fell on Alabama. By Carl Carmer. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.

The Ways of White Folks. By Langston Hughes. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

CARL CARMER went to Alabama a bit too anxious to please. He is so sunny and good-natured about everything from grits and collard greens to Scottsboro that it rather makes your bones ache. These Alabamans are so persistently and so confoundedly cute, even in their cruelties, the old aristocracy is so aristocratic and the niggers so niggery. Thank you kindly. Hand me the Bill Faulkner.

Sample, page ninety-three: "We had planned a few days' tour before the visit Mary Louise had planned was to begin. An hour or so after we had started we had seen the red-gold of the dust turn to white. Below that white surface black soil—the Black Belt from whose dark and fertile land rose pillared glories with names that are poems—Rosemont, Bluff Hall, Gainswood, Oakleigh, Farmdale, Snow Hill, Tulip Hill, Winsor, Chantilly, Athol, Longwood, Westwood, Waldwie."

Poems man? You do not make words poetic by asserting they are poetic. Where is your poetry?

The book promises well. There is poetry in the title and the foreword excites. And then, too, Farrar and Rinehart have made the book well. Physically it is beautiful and Mr. Cyrus LeRoy Baldridge has made some drawings that are charming, but for me the book doesn't come off. I have already seen that some critic has said that it was not made for home consumption and I think he is wrong. I think the Southerners will love it, particularly the professional Southerners of New York and Chicago. Mr. Stribling you are quite safe. This man will never steal your Alabama from you.

Nerts, say I. All this fuss because some Alabama farmer invites you to supper. It always did annoy me, this business, some Yank going South. No one shoots him. A Negro woman brings a cup of coffee to his bed in the morning. He eats hot bread. The hotel rooms are dirty. Now he is off. . . . "Oh this gorgeous land, home of old romance," etc., etc. Not that it isn't all true enough, if you could get below Alabama life, down into it. . . . Indiana life for that matter . . . what makes people what they are, the real feel of the life around you, get down into you, become a part of you and come out of you.

I don't think Mr. Carmer does it. He skirts it now and then and when he becomes what he really is, a very competent gatherer-up of names of fiddlers' tunes, collector of folk tales told by others, etc., the book begins to have real value. He should have confined himself to that work. The man is not a story teller.

And, as I have said, this other business, this damned half apology before Southerners for being born a Northerner, this casualness about Southern cruelty. There is an innocent school teacher taken out to a tree and hanged because he had a relative who was a murderer. "Give me a cigarette. Let's go down to Mary Louise's house. These Alabamans are so cute, don't you think."

There is one favorite Southern tale I didn't find in the book. It is about the white farmer who came down to the cross-road general store. Several other white farmers lounging about. "Well," he says, "I killed me a nigger this morning." Silence. He yawns. "Boys," he says, "I bet you that nigger will go three hundred pounds." To make his book quite perfect, Mr. Carmer should have got that one in. It is so cute.

"The Ways of White Folks" is something to puzzle you. If Mr. Carmer goes one way, Mr. Langston Hughes goes another. You can't exactly blame him. Mr. Hughes is an infinitely better, more natural, story teller than Mr. Carmer. To my mind he gets the ball over the plate better, has a lot more on the ball but there is something missed. Mr. Carmer is a member of the Northern white race gone South, rather with jaws set, determined to please and be pleased, and Mr. Hughes might be taken as a member of the Southern colored race gone North, evidently not determined about anything but with a deep-seated resentment in him. It is in his blood, so deep-seated that he seems himself unconscious of it. The Negro people in these stories of his are so alive, warm, and real and the whites are all caricatures, life, love, laughter, old wisdom all to the Negroes and silly pretense, fakiness, pretty much all to the whites.

It seems to me a paying for old sins all around, reading these two books. We'll be paying for the World War for hundreds of years yet and if we ever get that out of us we may still be paying interest on slavery.

Mr. Hughes, my hat off to you in relation to your own race but not to mine.

It is difficult. The difficulties faced by Mr. Hughes, as a story teller, are infinitely greater than those faced by Mr. Carmer. Mr. Carmer has but to take the old attitude toward the American Negro. "They are amusing. They are so primitive." If you go modern you go so far as to recognize that Negro men can be manly and Negro women beautiful. It is difficult to do even that without at least appearing to be patronizing. You begin to sound like an Englishman talking about Americans or a Virginian talking about a Texan. Even when you don't mean it you sound like that.

The truth is, I suspect, that there is, back of all this, a thing very little understood by any of us. It is an individualistic world. I may join the Socialist or the Communist Party but that doesn't let me out of my own individual struggle with myself. It may be that I can myself establish something between myself and the American Negro man or woman that is sound. Can I hold it? I am sitting in a room with such a man or woman and we are talking. Others, of my own race, come in. How can I tell what is asleep in these others? Something between the Negro man and myself gets destroyed . . . it is the thing D. H. Lawrence was always speaking of as "the flow." My neighbor, the white man, coming in to me as I sit with my Negro friend, may have qualities I value highly but he may also stink with old prejudice. "What, you have a damn nigger in

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here?" In the mind of the Negro: "Damn the whites. You can't trust them." That, fed constantly by pretense of understanding where there is no understanding. Myself and Mr. Carmer paying constantly for the prejudices of a whole race. Mr. Hughes paying too. Don't think he doesn't pay.

But story telling is something else, or should be. It too seldom is. There are always too many story tellers using their talents to get even with life. There is a plane to be got on—the impersonal. Mr. Hughes gets on it perfectly with his Negro men and women. He has a fine talent. I do not see how anyone can blame him for his hatreds. I think Red-Headed Baby is a bum story. The figure of Oceola Jones in the story, The Blues I'm Playing, is the most finely drawn in the book. The book is a good book.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON

Neither Gogol nor Tolstoy

And Quiet Flows the Don. By Mikhail Sholokhov. Translated by Stephen Garry. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

SHOLOKHOV'S long novel concerns itself with a Cossack village during the awful decade of 1910 to 1920. Awful is the word, whatever is going on; whether the civil war at the close, the war with Austria and Germany between 1914 and 1917, or the "peace" which infests Tatarsk at the beginning. It is most particularly in his handling of ante-bellum Tatarsk that Sholokhov shows himself to be a modern author, contemporary with Gorky, Reymont, Caradoc Evans, and William Faulkner; for his Cossacks have neither the nobility nor the picturesqueness with which Gogol and Tolstoy endowed their creatures of the far South. He has made them wholly bestial; they love, work, brawl, drink, and stink like some race of animals hitherto unknown either to history or to fiction. Their tempers are so uniformly ungovernable that a burst of rage comes finally to have no more effect upon the reader than good deep breathing would have in the hero of a novel more moderately constructed. And their passions are so regularly aroused that such an act as Natalia's cutting her throat with a scythe—unsuccessfully, so that thereafter she is wry-necked—passes as the most ordinary sort of incident.

The Cossacks may like this. I do not know. But I suspect that Sholokhov is merely being one of those authors who feed their readers, as Wordsworth once put it, on "gross and violent stimulants," and who rely upon the almost certain presence of enough cruelty in any reader's disposition to keep him watching and listening while men get sliced to pieces and women stamped on. The method does not pay, at least in the present instance. For after 250 pages of peacetime brutalities there are 300 pages of wartime atrocities to stagger through, not to speak of sundry slaughters incidental to the Revolution; so that throughout the last quarter of the narrative one is jaded, one is ashamed, and drearily watches death reap Russia.

If it were plain that Sholokhov had manipulated the reader into this weariness through a desire to show him how freshly the winds of a New Day could blow thenceforth and forever, then Sholokhov would have justified his monotony. But there are two reasons why such an intention must be doubted. One is that the horrors pile right on to the end—the Reds are equally bloody with the Whites, and so far as I can see they are equally perverted. Sholokhov really likes wholesale executions, I think. The other reason is that the New Day as we feel it here brings only the feeblest breeze. Sholokhov does his duty; he is doctrinaire in the right places; he introduces whenever necessary the dedicated Worker who understands what history is all about and says so at great length. But he does not know how to do such things convincingly. The revolutionary dialogues are dull, and the heroes who have read Marx are quite mechanical. Listen, for example, to the saintly Anna as she explains to the saintly Bunchuk why it is that they two must think more steadily about mankind than about their love.

> How poisonous and petty seems any care for the achievement of one's own individual little happiness at the present time! What does it signify in comparison with the uncompassable human happiness which suffering humanity will achieve through the revolution? Isn't that so? We must be wholly absorbed into this struggle for liberation, we must . . . fuse with the collective group and forget ourselves as isolated parts.

It may be the translator who nodded there, but I suspect the novelist of having fallen into a deep sleep. He was not interested in Bunchuk and Anna. He was interested in Gregor, Piotra, Natalia, Aksinia, Dunia, Daria, Stepan, and Pantaleimon Prokoffievitch—in these and their animal natures, and in the animal things they did. So may the reader be interested in them, at least up to the point which has been indicated. When the book is not strained it is vivid beyond most books, and when it is not sensational according to the vogue it manages to say a great deal about the Cossacks which must not have been said before and which, since it is said brilliantly, will therefore become part of the permanent record. As a revolutionary novel "Tikhi Don" seems to me a failure; as a novel it seems to me as good as it can be in view of the fact that it was not written by a wiser man for a sounder generation.

MARK VAN DOREN

Religion and Pessimism

Reflections on the End of an Era. By Reinhold Niebuhr. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR is a kind of twentieth-century Savonarola. The parallel is more than superficial. A professor is the nearest metropolitan equivalent to a quattrocento monk. The Union Theological Seminary is no doubt as close as New York can come to San Marco. Like Savonarola Mr. Neibuhr is a striking figure and an impressive orator. And, most important, his message, transmitted to the idiom of our day, is the same: purity in religion and radicalism in politics. Doubtless he will not end by burning. We do things differently. But if his radicalism goes much farther he is fairly sure to lose his job. (We no longer take reform in religion so seriously.)

The specific content of Niebuhr's thought can be traced more accurately to the generation after Savonarola. Niebuhr rests his analyses on Machiavelli's view of human nature and a cleansed version of Luther's view of religion. From these foundations the present essays proceed to survey our time and the issues confronting us. They are not by any means so sustained and coherent an attempt as "Moral Man and Immoral Society." However, in everything he writes Niebuhr drives so much more deeply than our myriad surface critics that he is always worth reading.

The book is hard to summarize. The leading thesis running through it may be roughly outlined as follows: Our era is doomed. It will die, not by any gradual dissolution, but in a series of violent and dreadful catastrophes. The technical conditions of human life in modern society demand the socialist organization of society, and this will inevitably come about. All liberal beliefs in gradual progress on the basis of the existing order are therefore bankrupt, are no more than the rationalizations of privilege. Politically, Marxian communism is the only tenable position. But ethically and spiritually, communism retains some of the shreds of liberalism. For though it asserts a realistic pessimism in estimating the possibilities of the present

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order, it nevertheless keeps a utopian optimism in believing that perfect justice will be embodied in the coming socialist society.

Perfect justice will never be embodied in human society. The dark springs of nature and impulse in individual men are multiplied cumulatively in human collectives, and are guaranties against the full realization of social justice. Therefore profound insight must add to radicalism in politics what Niebuhr calls religion. By religion he means an intuition of the absolute, in which perspective it becomes clear both that perfect justice and love can never be historically realized and that the ethical paradox involved in this impossibility is yet acceptable to the human spirit.

It is hardly possible that modern society will allow this Savonarola to rule a city, and he would almost certainly fail as sadly as his predecessor failed. But it is perhaps more necessary now than ever before that there should be at least a few men to write so steadfastly and uncompromisingly, facing the present without succumbing to it wholly. It is not always easy to remember that our day, too, is an episode.

JAMES BURNHAM

Must Farmers Be Prosperous?

The Mainstay of American Individualism. A Survey of the Farm Question. By Cassius M. Clay. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

American Farm Policy. By Wilson Gee. W. W. Norton Company. $1.50.

THE same general ideas dominate these two books. Both authors believe that agriculture is the fundamental, or most fundamental, phase of economic life. Both recognize the individualism of farmers, and fail to find its counterpart in other walks of life, by which they arrive at the conclusion that the main and last hope of maintaining our liberties lies in the country as opposed to the city. Clay argues this openly and at length; Gee rather implies, or takes for granted, the same view. Both authors assume at least—Gee does not stress it—that in the interest of general prosperity, agricultural buying power must be restored. Both give more or less adequate sketches of past agricultural history and its vicissitudes. While both appear to be favorably disposed toward the New Deal, Professor Gee expresses a real faith in it; Mr. Clay does not.

"The Mainstay of American Individualism" is some three times as voluminous a book as "American Farm Policy," and at the same time a much more ambitious one. Although Mr. Clay disclaims the purpose of writing a book on agricultural economics, he nevertheless dips into a very large part of the agricultural economist's subject matter, and shows either a lack of agreement or an unfamiliarity with the economist's beliefs. This may not be a very serious consideration, since the main purpose of the book is not that of a reference work but rather that of the presentation of a thesis—namely, the view that capitalism is in danger of dissolution, and that a strong farmer class may be able to save it. Even so, it is unfortunate that so many doubtful or incorrect statements and implications found their way into the book.

That agriculture is fundamental to civilization is no doubt beyond the realm of argument. That because of its elemental significance it plays the role of Atlas in supporting all industry and its prosperity is more than doubtful. If industry cannot prosper with agriculture in the dumps, how did it manage to get along so well from about 1878 to 1892? Or again, how account for the unprecedented industrial prosperity from 1922 to 1929? Surely, the farmers did not have much share in the good things of either period. The statement that agriculture led the way downward to the depths of the depression is by no means defensible in the sense implied. Moreover, "restoring the lost balance between . . . farm and factory" is not subject to simple and certain interpretation.

The one requirement that industry makes upon agriculture is that the latter furnish food and certain materials of manufacture for the use of it and its constituents. That agriculture must be paid any given amount for the services is unproved by theory or facts. Urban groups may flourish at the expense of farm groups. Indeed, they have on more than one occasion. Too much exploitation might upset the political machinery, as Mr. Clay suggests. However, it remains to be proved that industry, if it wants to prosper, must promote and guarantee the prosperity of the farmer. Industry might prosper were the farmers slaves—that is, if they were passive enough to be slaves fully and openly, instead of merely allowing impositions to continue.

Mr. Clay states emphatically, and repeatedly, that low prices lead the farmer to produce more. Professor Gee agrees. This would be significant if true, but in spite of some superficial evidence pointing in that direction it simply isn't true. There has been little change in the aggregate acreage of crops in ten years, and no material change in production during the past five years of depression. Per farmer-worker there has been, mainly owing to technique, an increase in output.

Mr. Clay's discussion of taxation is not convincing. He says, "High taxes are part of a vicious circle which leads to increased production in bad times." Taxes may cause production to increase or decrease. The statement is made that taxes tend to be reflected in high rental values. How taxes on land can be shifted is not clear, but Mr. Clay thinks "almost every kind of tax, except individual income taxes and inheritance taxes can be shifted." Land taxes, not to mention certain others of importance, are rather serious omissions from non-shiftable taxes. Mr. Clay's book deals with complex economic subject matter, and is full of faults so far as economics is concerned. Nevertheless, the question of the survival of individualism is the main one at issue, and the treatment given the subject is both stimulating and challenging.

BENJAMIN HORACE HIBBARD

In Need of a Purge

Wine and Physic. By Alexander Laing. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.

THE title of this book is taken from the concluding lines of Elinor Wylie's dedication to "Trivial Breath." The poem, it will be recalled, records Mrs. Wylie's inalterable affection for her native tongue, and it is a similar emotion that has prompted the author of the present work to write these ornate verses and earnest essays.

Mr. Laing is rendered uneasy by an experimentalism that seems to him to end in a blind alley. He regards Gertrude Stein as "completely of her period, a bizarre offshoot of social forces that had all gone very much a-gley," and Joyce as a sturdy pioneer in a region that promises small rewards. He asks us to recognize that English is a middle-aged language, and that we cannot restore its youth by artificial means. Admitting that artists should be free to develop their unique forms of expression, he pleads with less creative writers and with all educators, whether or not they belong to the teaching profession, to be slow to accept the innovations of genius, to stand firm against the debasement of the language by the mob, and, by a rigorous attention to good usage, to preserve the heritage of English literature and to sharpen the instrument of communication. Mr. Laing recognizes that formal education offers an author little but "incentives to a valuable disgust," but he believes that

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the artist can take care of himself, and insists on the necessity for a stricter discipline in the classroom so that the mass of future readers may have a nicer sense of language than, under the present anarchic conditions, they can acquire. He distinguishes between the language of action and the language of thought, and suggests a reform of education which would take account of this difference, leading the child from the natural vocabulary of action to "the scientific vocabulary of contemplation," and leaving him, at the end of his schooling, "with a flexibility of command over speech suited to the level of culture in which he is likely to spend his life." Finally, he begs that teachers, instead of surrendering before the vulgarization of language through the radio and the talkie, take advantage of these new implements of education. Mr. Laing's object all sublime is, by such control, to eliminate the Walter Winchells and discourage the objectivists, while giving ample scope to the Ogden Nashes and the James Joyces.

There is something to be said for Mr. Laing's suggestions, but he seems all too hopeful of a change in the structure of our society which would make it possible to realize them. What chiefly disturbs the reader, however, is the fact that Mr. Laing's taste inclines strongly toward such writers as Roy Campbell, Edna Millay, and Hervey Allen, rather than toward writers who uphold the tradition with greater dignity or who build upon it with more originality and vigor. Further, his own style, now lush with metaphor (often mixed), now stiff with abstractions, and subject to Coleridgean divagations, makes one doubtful of his authority in the matters so near his heart. If his prose is stilted, his poetry is reminiscent, overly ornamented, and burdened with an allegorical meaning that is only clear after one has read his essays. If he were to take a dose of his own "physic," purging his style so as to reduce its present bloated aspect, and thereafter indulge in a dash of "wine," so as to enliven his discourse, he might find a more responsive audience for ideas that merit consideration.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

The Dilemma of the Jews

The Jews in the Modern World. By Arthur Ruppin. The Macmillan Company. $5.

How Odd of God: An Introduction to the Jews. By Lewis Browne. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

BOTH of these books should be read by everyone who undertakes to discuss the practical problems raised by those recurrent outbursts of anti-Semitism of which that in Hitler Germany is the most recent. Each is written by a Jew and an authority on the history of his people, and both works are free from hasty judgments and the hysteria engendered by events of the moment. Mr. Ruppin's is designedly a scholarly and statistically documented volume; Mr. Borwne's, while covering the same ground on a smaller scale, is couched in more general and more popular terms. Both authors face the same questions and reach, more or less, the same conclusions. Neither is very optimistic in his conclusions nor offers any immediate solution of the problem.

The first difficulty is to determine who is a Jew. In these days of universal agnosticism, faith in the Jewish religion is no test. Despite the "Aryan" experts, blood is no criterion, for there are Negro Jews in Abyssinia and New York City, and Indian Jews in Cochin, on the Malabar coast. In London there is an "Association of Christian Hebrews," which has begun to settle in Palestine and insists upon its unity with the Jewish people. Racially the Jews are a mixture of the Alpine and Mediterranean type and have "no racial characteristics peculiar to the Jews only," according to Mr. Ruppin. "In various proportions the racial components of Jewry enter also into the racial composition of other European and Asiatic nations." With the Armenians, for example, "racial characteristics which are considered 'typically Jewish' are even more marked than with the Jews."

The second difficulty is that the Jews are excessively urbanized, yet they are migratory, with the result that they differentiate themselves from all other races by having no roots in the soil, but expose themselves most readily to de-Judaizing influences by living in large urban centers. One-eighth of the Jewish population of the world lives in New York, one-third of world-Jewry in English-speaking countries, and 40.2 per cent in Slav countries. Of the total Jewish population of the world, 15,846,000, Mr. Ruppin states that 11,200,000 live in the United States, Poland, Russia, and Rumania. It is the fate of the Jews in these last three countries which chiefly preoccupies Mr. Browne and Mr. Ruppin. The changes in the American immigration laws have seriously affected them, Hitler Germany has greatly complicated the situation, and Zionism, in which both authors believe, cannot possibly cope with the surplus population thus represented. Both authors accord grudging recognition to the only country which has made anti-Semitism a crime, which refuses to recognize any religious or racial distinctions, save in so far as territory has been allotted to Jews as to other varied elements of the Russian people who wish to establish their own communities. Mr. Browne is non-committal, while Mr. Ruppin's preface (by a colleague, L. B. Namier) almost expresses the hope that there will arise an ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic communism, which will deprive the Chosen People of their new grievance, to wit, that Russia has solved the Jewish problem in the only way it can ever be solved. The objection to the Soviet method of, of course, its hostility to all established religion, including Judaism.

Here we come to the crux of the whole matter. Intolerance is essentially the product of religious conviction. Since attachment to his religion is the one thing that sets the Jew apart from his fellow-citizens, it is peculiar that Jewish leaders insist upon this differentiation, and then express surprise if the Gentile world holds aloof or is definitely hostile. Assimilation is, as Mr. Ruppin conclusively proves, ever on the increase. It is a natural and normal process and will finally do what Russia has done by decree. This is deplored by most of the spokesmen of Jewry. They want to eat their Judaistic cake, then have the Gentile cake of non-discrimination. Since orthodox Jews discriminate against *goyim* in the most pointed manner, it is only human that the latter should retort in kind. One cannot raise and encourage barriers, and then protest against the consequences. If the offal-eating, non-kosher Gentiles were a similar minority in a Jewish country, maintaining all their Christian paraphernalia, however medieval, they could not reasonably expect to be accepted on terms of equality by the community.

Like the clergy of other denominations, the rabbis have a vested interest in keeping alive the superstition that an assimilated Jew is a renegade and not a Jew. By the same token, Bernard Shaw is a renegade and not an Irishman because he is not a Catholic. Dr. Ruppin's pages are packed with evidence that, once he ceases to practice his religion, the Jew becomes indistinguishable from other people of his own type and general stage of social development. Jewish patriots and anti-Semites are at one in their detestation of this phenomenon, as the Jewish abuse of Soviet Russia proves. The former insist upon differences and then disclaim responsibility for the consequences, sometimes tragic at others merely unpleasant, which inevitably follow separatism. In Palestine, or any other region exclusively occupied by Jews, they are obviously at liberty to emphasize every tradition which marks them off from the Gentile world. But, seeing that the very nature of Judaism makes it

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unlike any other Western religion in its practices and observances, and in view of its exploitation to foment self-consciousness, it is perfectly evident that it must always set apart those who believe in it. Those who so fiercely resent assimilation must face the consequences of discrimination. The latter is bad enough, in all conscience, in those countries where no opportunities for the former are offered.

ERNEST BOYD

American Episode

The Mississippi Question. By Arthur Preston Whitaker. D. Appleton-Century Company. $3.50.

IN this book the author concerns himself with the period between 1795 when Spain granted American citizens the privilege of free navigation of the Mississippi and the so-called "right of deposit" at New Orleans, and the purchase of the Louisiana territory by the United States from France in 1803. The fact that the volume was published for the American Historical Association is a guaranty of its scholarly character; but it does not follow that it is likewise dry-as-dust. On the contrary the style is lively, even humorous in places, and the narrative is interesting. The unifying theme is found in a quotation from the Spanish Minister, Godoy, "You can't lock up an open field." American pioneers, land speculators, merchants, and politicians would not be denied by the decadent Spanish monarchy on the one hand nor the over-reaching French Empire on the other. The charge that we were party to a crime in that we bought stolen goods from Napoleon when we purchased Louisiana Professor Whitaker does not take very seriously. He shows that Spain ceded Louisiana willingly to Napoleon, hoping that the latter would turn the province into a buffer between the expanding American democracy and Mexico. That Napoleon was willing to sacrifice it to "larger ends" was our good fortune. Most Americans would agree that the cause of "progress" was well served by the transfer. The conviction that we would have gotten it sooner or later anyway was expressed as early as 1803 by Governeur Morris who wrote "I knew as well then [1787] as I do now that all North America must at length be annexed to us—happy, indeed, if the lust of dominion stop there." This line of reasoning runs that since "manifest destiny" had to be served it was better and cheaper for all concerned for us to purchase the (stolen?) territory from Napoleon than eventually to have acquired it by conquest from Spain. Who can say?

B. B. KENDRICK

A Prodigal Book

Matador. By Marguerite Steen. Little, Brown, and Company. $2.50.

MISS STEEN'S "Matador" is a curiously prodigal book. It is the author's tenth novel and the product of an expert pen and a fecund mind. Therein lie its many virtues and its one fault: that it is too abundant, its clothes too numerous for the skeleton Miss Steen has chosen to dress. After all, as the title suggests, its subject is a highly specialized one. The bull ring, the city of Granada, an ex-matador and his family, offer limitations and definite restrictions. Miss Steen employs a prose style that is an effective instrument in her hands but, as it is played, one that gives off the full, rich music of a large orchestra rather than of a quartet whose chamber-music the specialized or localized novel would lead one to expect. However grateful one may be for a book of such varied interest, one is likely to feel that Miss Steen has ex-

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ceeded the limits she set herself, that the clothes on her skeleton were made for a bigger frame.

After noting this fundamental flaw, we have nothing but praise for the story of Don José Diáz Marquez and his three sons. There is much more in the book than a brief review can suggest. One has a sense of Spain beyond Granada, of the temper of the people, of the luxuriant beauty about them and the purlieus in which they live. One is aware of the political arena in which the republicans are performing dangerous and not too graceful *veronicas,* of the church as a powerful influence on the people and as a tumor on the national brain. Also, one understands Miguel, a true *aficionado,* who is resentful that his twisted body can never face a bull and sits at the bull fight thinking: "There's enough valor down there to set Spain alight and save her from her ignominy. Watching one man doing a difficult thing bravely makes one feel one must go and do one's own thing bravely, whatever that may be."

LEONARD AMSTER

Shorter Notices

Hoxsie Sells His Acres. An American Novel in Verse. By Christopher La Farge. Coward-McCann. $2.

Here is a capably told story in verse (not at any time really fine poetry) of the disruption of a Rhode Island village when one of the old settlers sells his lands. It is a good psychological study of village characters and their tangled lives.

Duranty Reports Russia. By Walter Duranty. Selected and Arranged by Gustavus Tuckerman, Jr. The Viking Press. $2.75.

It is well-nigh impossible, within the limit of a brief review, to do justice to the twelve-year record of Walter Duranty as New York *Times* correspondent in Moscow. These collected dispatches constitute a record that has already become a standard by which journalistic achievement is measured. Particularly striking, viewed in retrospect, is Mr. Duranty's almost uncanny capacity for gauging correctly the relative importance and the essential qualities of personalities as well as their relationship to events. And this collection demonstrates how correct and farsighted he has been in his interpretation of the happenings in Soviet Russia during the past twelve years. It is obvious that Mr. Duranty, particularly during his first three or four years in Russia, by keeping in check his own prejudices, antipathies, and sympathies, evolved a rationalistic dispassionate method of reporting that is probably without a parallel today. There exists no account which makes more intelligible to the outside observer the epic of the construction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with all its incongruity, tragedy, and heroism. Mr. Duranty's dispatches, read together, are a vivid kaleidoscope which not only shows contours and forms sharply but also reveals their essence.

Samuel Pepys. The Man in the Making. By Arthur Bryant. The Macmillan Company. $3.

Many excellent scholars have attempted the biography of Pepys, and several, notably Tanner, Ponsonby, and Drinkwater, have produced valuable studies; but if the present volume indicates the quality of Mr. Bryant's complete work, he has written the definitive life. Obviously the result of scholarship at once thorough and affectionate, the book presents the full character of Pepys against the varied background of Restoration England, Although the author has freely used the rich source material available for his scene, he has resisted the temptation to digress in order merely to show his erudition. When he speaks of the condition of the navy he remembers that his primary concern is the part played in naval affairs by Pepys; and when he deals with the Dutch War he keeps in mind the fact that his major interest is its effect on the life of the Secretary of the Naval Board. His restraint is remarkable, perhaps excessive, in the passages telling of the plague, of the fire and its aftermath, and of Pepys at the play. As the book draws gracefully to its close Pepys stands forth a man and a hero. He has fought valiantly for his little fortune, for his joys both furtive and social, and for England. The sordidness of his craving for money is diminished by his taste in spending it, the occasional vulgarity of his joys by his humanity in alternately seeking and hating them, the venality of his public life by his essential desire, never truly departed from, to serve himself only after king and country have had their utmost. He dared to live abundantly, and if he did not always cherish the highest virtue, he held to a liberal standard in an age when most ways of life were either too narrow or too broad. The volume is eminently readable. One lays it down with regret tempered only by the anticipation of its sequel.

Duck's Back. By Kate Mary Bruce. The John Day Company. $2.50.

This novel is a study in contrasts between British character and American. The story, cleverly told and ironic, describes the destruction brought into the Kent household by Sara and Jerry Hurst, expatriate Americans. The narrator is the novelist and the whole is seen through her half-humorous, half-despairing eyes. The characters in this book are exceedingly well drawn, very much alive, and subtly individualized. The author's style is clever, well adapted to her purpose of smart satire.

The American Farmer and the Export Market. By Austin A. Dowell and Oscar B. Jesness. University of Minnesota Press. $2.

In this little volume the authors have succeeded in giving to the public a clear and acceptable analysis of a complex and vital subject. The various proposals for solving the question of how and where farm products may be marketed more advantageously than opportunity now affords are considered under two main headings: The Home Market and The Export Market. It is shown that we are facing the prospect of little increase in population. Likewise, increased consumption of farm products is shown to be unlikely. In the face of greater efficiency of the farmer, the difficulties of reducing output to domestic requirements are, as the authors view it, well-nigh insuperable. Our farmers must meet the competition of other farmers directly or indirectly. Under the heading The Export Market a short chapter on the tariff is offered, and another shows the relation of the farmer to the tariff. In the closing chapters is found a good statement of the problems confronting the government in its task of restoring foreign trade, in connection with which it is noted that the AAA is framed on the obvious basis of national self-sufficiency. The views of the authors, while not over-optimistic respecting the outcome, are unmistakably in favor of developing and promoting foreign trade, which policy they admit will require a downward revision of our tariffs and increased importations of finished goods.

German Family. By L. C. N. Stone. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

The jacket of "German Family" praises it as a superb novel, an important revelation. This is a pity, because it is neither. It is a competent, lively narrative of the effect of the coming of the Hitler régime upon a family which by inter-marriage is part English, part German, part German-Jewish. It has no revelations to offer, at least none that the newspapers of the world have not offered to their readers over and over again. On the underlying factors, economic, social, psychologi-

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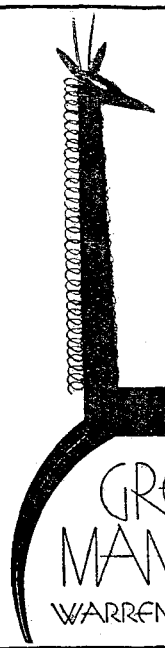

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cal, it is silent. But it describes with sympathy and sensitiveness, for all its light touch, the miseries that descend on one after the other of the Hirsch family and their connections as the Nazis gain ground. There is the German Jew whose people have lived in Germany for generations and who loves his fatherland: suddenly made to feel a pariah, whose resignation from the Steel Helmets is demanded, whose clubs will have none of him, whose business is ruined, whose mistress is afraid to remain with him, who has to march to police headquarters with his arms above his head, he kills himself. There is the delicate and highly strung youth who dies as a result of Nazi maltreatment, the scientist whose laboratory is wrecked, the playwright whose manuscript is destroyed, the student whose studies are cut short and her future darkened, all for no reason except their Jewish blood. There is even one rather absurd and unconvincing girl Communist, who is rescued and smuggled out of Germany in the nick of time. For those individuals who cannot be bothered to read facts or to ponder them, however terrible, except in the guise of fiction, Miss Stone has provided a useful statement as well as a varied entertainment. But her presentation of her theme is as superficial as it is vivid.

The Later Wordsworth. By Edith C. Batho. The Macmillan Company. $6.

Miss Batho's book will have to be taken into account henceforth by any person who wants to talk sense about Wordsworth. Such a person will have learned from Miss Batho how not to talk like a parrot about "the lost leader" of legend. The older Wordsworth, contrary to the prejudiced testimony of Leigh Hunt, Keats, Haydon, Hazlitt, Byron, and Shelley—the only testimony which is ever repeated—remained to his death tolerant, humane, vigorous of mind, and within appropriate limits modest concerning himself and his work. The fact that he did not ossify into a liberal at thirty-five has been taken to mean that he descended into reaction in the fields of politics and religion; to Miss Batho it means that he kept on thinking and that in many respects he was right—or, if not right, worthy of intellectual respect and understandable on intellectual grounds. Those who do not share her enthusiasm for the old poet's ideas will at least be under the obligation to listen to her statement of them. With respect to his later personality it should be impossible after this book for anyone to repeat the standard charges of coldness, arrogance, and absurdity. And with respect to the later poetry it will be incumbent upon any commentator to acknowledge Miss Batho's evidence for her conviction that the difference in its quality is conceivably accounted for as much by Wordsworth's continued illness and prospect of blindness as by a hypothetical loss of spiritual and psychological powers.

Silius Italicus. Punica. Translated by J. D. Duff. Two volumes. *Philo.* Volume V. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. Loeb Classical Library. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50 per volume.

Of these three volumes in the Loeb Classical Library the third continues with Philo, who will not be complete until the ninth volume, and the first two contain text and translation of a Roman epic which has not seen the light of English since 1672. Mr. Duff tries gracefully in his introduction to defend Silius Italicus against the immemorial charge of dulness, even going so far as to point out the best passages so that any reader may test him. There is no doubt that the Punic wars are an interesting story. The only trouble with Silius, even in his best passages, is that he is appallingly prosaic.

Louis Hacker will review George Soule's "The Coming American Revolution" and Walter Lippmann's "The Method of Freedom" next week in The Nation.

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